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THE TROUBADOUR,

AND

OTHER POEMS.

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THE TROUBADOU
LONDON
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1825

THE TROUBADOUR

THE TROUBADOUR;

CATALOGUE OF PICTURES,

AND

HISTORICAL SKETCHES.

BY L. E. L.

AUTHOR OF THE IMPROVISATRICE.

The age of chivalry is gone.
BURKE.

SECOND EDITION.

LONDON:

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SO MUCH INDEBTED TO HIS KIND SURVEILLANCE,

IS INSCRIBED,

BY

THE OBLIGED AUTHOR,

L. E. L.

E. Mathews - 10 October, 1918

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE Poem of The TROUBADOUR is founded upon an ancient custom of Provence, according to which a festival was held, and the minstrel who bore away the prize from his competitors was rewarded, by the lady chosen to preside, with a *Golden Violet*. It is hardly necessary to say, that this makes only the conclusion of the tale,—all the earlier parts being given to chivalrous adventure and to description characteristic of the age.

L. E. L.

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THE TROUBADOUR.

CANTO I.

THE TROUBADOUR.

CANTO I.

Call to mind your loveliest dream,—
When your sleep is lull'd by a mountain stream,
When your pillow is made of the violet,
And over your head the branches are met
Of a lime-tree cover'd with bloom and bees,
When the roses' breath is on the breeze,
When odours and light on your eyelids press
With summer's delicious idleness;

And upon you some shadowy likeness may glance
Of the faery banks of the bright Durance;
Just where at first its current flows
'Mid willows and its own white rose,—
Its clear and early tide, or ere
A shade, save trees, its waters bear.

The sun, like an Indian king, has left
To that fair river a royal gift
Of gold and purple; no longer shines
His broad red disk o'er that forest of pines
Sweeping beneath the burning sky
Like a death-black ocean, whose billows lie
Dreaming dark dreams of storm in their sleep
When the wings of the tempest shall over them sweep.
—And with its towers cleaving the red
Of the sunset clouds, and its shadow spread

Like a cloak before it, darkening the ranks
Of the light young trees on the river's banks,
And ending there, as the waters shone
Too bright for shadows to rest upon,
A castle stands; whose windows gleam
Like the golden flash of a noon-lit stream
Seen through the lily and water-flags' screen:
Just so shine those panes through the ivy green,
A curtain to shut out sun and air,
Which the work of years has woven there.
—But not in the lighted pomp of the west
Looks the evening its loveliest;
Enter yon turret, and round you gaze
On what the twilight east displays:
One star, pure, clear, as if it shed
The dew on each young flower's head;

And, like a beauty of southern clime,
Her veil thrown back for the first time,
Pale, timid as she feared to own
Her claim upon the midnight throne,
Shows the fair moon her crescent sign.
—Beneath, in many a serpentine,
The river wanders; chesnut trees
Spread their old boughs o'er cottages
Where the low roofs and porticoes
Are cover'd with the Provence rose.
And there are vineyards: none might view
The fruit o'er which the foliage weaves;
And olive groves, pale as the dew
Crusted its silver o'er the leaves.
And there the castle garden lay
With tints in beautiful array:

Its dark green walks, its fountains falling,
Its tame birds to each other calling;
The peacock with its orient rings,
The silver pheasant's gleaming wings;
And on the breeze rich odours sent
Sweet messages, as if they meant
To rouse each sleeping sense to all
The loveliness of evening's fall.— '
That lonely turret, is it not
A minstrel's own peculiar spot?
Thus with the light of shadowy grey
To dream the pleasant hours away.

Slight columns were around the hall
With wreathed and fluted pedestal
Of green Italian marble made,
In likeness of the palm-trees' shade;

And o'er the ceiling starry showers
Mingled with many-colour'd flowers,
With crimson roses o'er her weeping,
There lay that royal maiden sleeping—
DANAE, she whom gold could move—
How could it move her heart to love?
Between the pillars the rich fold
Of tapestry fell, inwrought with gold,
And many-colour'd silks which gave,
Strange legends of the fair and brave.
And there the terrace covered o'er
With summer's fair and scented store;
As grateful for the gentle care
That had such pride to keep it fair.

And, gazing, as if heart and eye
Were mingled with that lovely sky,

There stood a youth, slight as not yet
With manhood's strength and firmness set;
But on his cold, pale cheek were caught
The traces of some deeper thought,
A something seen of pride and gloom,
Not like youth's hour of light and bloom:
A brow of pride, a lip of scorn,—
  Yet beautiful in scorn and pride—
A conscious pride, as if he own'd
  Gems hidden from the world beside;
And scorn, as he cared not to learn
Should others prize those gems or spurn.
He was the last of a proud race
  Who left him but his sword and name,
And boyhood past in restless dreams
  Of future deeds and future fame.

But there were other dearer dreams
Than the light'ning flash of these war gleams
That fill'd the depths of RAYMOND'S heart;
For his was now the loveliest part
Of the young poet's life, when first,
In solitude and silence nurst,
His genius rises like a spring
Unnoticed in its wandering;
Ere winter cloud or summer ray
Have chill'd, or wasted it away,
When thoughts with their own beauty fill'd
  Shed their own richness over all,
As waters from sweet woods distill'd
  Breathe perfume out where'er they fall.
I know not whether Love can fling
A deeper witchery from his wing

Than falls sweet Power of Song from thine.
Yet, ah! the wreath that binds thy shrine,
Though seemingly all bloom and light,
Hides thorn and canker, worm and blight.
Planet of wayward destinies
Thy victims are thy votaries!
Alas! for him whose youthful fire
Is vowed and wasted on the lyre,—
Alas! for him who shall essay,
The laurel's long and dreary way!
Mocking will greet, neglect will chill
His spirit's gush, his bosom's thrill;
And, worst of all, that heartless praise
Echoed from what another says.
He dreams a dream of life and light,
And grasps the rainbow that appears

Afar all beautiful and bright,
And finds it only formed of tears.
Ay, let him reach the goal, let fame
Pour glory's sunlight on his name,
Let his songs be on every tongue,
And wealth and honours round him flung:
Then let him show his secret thought,
Will it not own them dearly bought?
See him in weariness fling down
The golden harp, the violet crown;
And sigh for all the toil, the care,
The wrong that he has had to bear;
Then wish the treasures of his lute
Had been, like his own feelings, mute,
And curse the hour when that he gave
To sight that wealth, his lord and slave.

But RAYMOND was in the first stage
Of life's enchanted pilgrimage:
'Tis not for Spring to think on all
The sear and waste of Autumn's fall:—
Enough for him to watch beside
The bursting of the mountain tide,
To wander through the twilight shade
By the dark, arching pine-boughs made,
And at the evening's starlit hour
To seek for some less shadowy bower,
Where dewy leaf, and flower pale,
Made the home of the nightingale.
Or he would seek the turret hall,
And there, unheard, unseen of all,
When even the night winds were mute,
His rich tones answer'd to the lute;

And in his pleasant solitude
He would forget his wayward mood,
And pour his spirit forth when none
Broke on his solitude, save one.

There is a light step passing by
Like the distant sound of music's sigh;
It is that fair and gentle child,
Whose sweetness has so oft beguiled,
Like sunlight on a stormy day,
His almost sullenness away.

They said she was not of mortal birth,
And her face was fairer than face of earth:
What is the thing to liken it to?
A lily just dipp'd in the summer dew—

Parian marble—snow's first fall?—
Her brow was fairer than each and all.
And so delicate was each vein's soft blue,
'Twas not like blood that wander'd through.
Rarely upon that cheek was shed,
By health or by youth, one tinge of red;
And never closest look could descry,
In shine, or in shade, the hue of her eye:
But as it were made of light, it changed,
With every sunbeam that over it ranged;
And that eye could look through the long dark lash,
With the moon's dewy smile, or the lightning's flash.
Her silken tresses, so bright and so fair,
Stream'd like a banner of light on the air,
And seldom its sunny wealth around
Was chaplet of flowers or ribbon bound;

But amid the gold of its thousand curls
Was twisted a braid of snow-white pearls,—
They said 'twas a charmed spell; that before,
This braid her nameless mother wore;
And many were the stories wild
Whisper'd of the neglected child.

Lord Amirald, (thus the tale was told),
The former lord of the castle-hold,—
Lord Amirald had followed the chase
Till he was first and last in the race;
The blood-dy'd sweat hung on his steed,
Each breath was a gasp, yet he stay'd not his speed.
Twice the dust and foam had been wash'd
By the mountain torrent that over them dash'd;
But still the stag held on his way,
Till a forest of pine trees before them lay,

And bounding and crashing boughs declare
The stag and the hunter have enter'd there.
On, on they went, till a greenwood screen
Lay AMIRALD and his prey between:
He has heard the creature sink on the ground,
And the branches give way at his courser's bound.

The spent stag on the grass is laid;
But over him is leant a maid,
Her arms and fair hair glistening
With the bright waters of the spring;
And AMIRALD paused, and gazed, as seeing
Were grown the sole sense of his being.

At first she heard him not, but bent
Upon her pitying task intent;

The summer clouds of hair that hung
Over her brow were backwards flung,
She saw him! Her first words were prayer
Her gasping favourite's life to spare;
But her next tones were soft and low,
And on her cheek a mantling glow
Play'd like a rainbow; and the eye
That raised in pleading energy,
Shed, starlike, its deep beauty round,
Seem'd now as if to earth spell-bound.—
They parted: but each one that night
Thought on the meeting at twilight.

It matters not, how, day by day,
Love made his sure but secret way.
Oh, where is there the heart but knows
Love's first steps are upon the rose!

And here were all which still should be
Nurses to Love's sweet infancy,—
Hope, mystery, absence:—then each thought
A something holy with it brought.
Their sighs were breathed, their vows were given
Before the face of the high Heaven,
Link'd not with courtly vanities,
But birds and blossoms, leaves and trees:—
Love was not made for palace pride,
For halls and domes—they met beside
A marble fountain, overgrown
With moss, that made it nature's own,
Though through the green shone veins of snow,
  Like the small Fairy's paved ways,
As if a relic left to show
  The luxury of departed days,

And show its nothingness. The wave
That princely brows was wont to lave
Was left now for the wild bird's bill,
And the red deer to drink their fill.
Yet still it was as fair a spot
As in its once more splendid lot:
Around, the dark sweep of the pine
Guarded it like a wood-nymph's shrine,
And the gold-spotted moss was set
With crowds of the white violet.
One only oak grew by the spring,
The forest's patriarch and king;
A nightingale had built her nest
In the green shadow of its rest;
And in its hollow trunk the bees
Dwelt in their honey palaces;

And underneath its shelter stood,
Leant like a beauty o'er the flood
Watching each tender bud unclose,
A beautiful white Provence rose;—
Yet wan and pale as that it knew
What changing skies and sun could do;
As that it knew, and, knowing, sigh'd,
The vanity of summer pride;
As watching could put off the hour
When falls the leaf and fades the flower.
Alas! that every lovely thing
Lives only but for withering,—
That spring rainbows and summer shine
End but in autumn's pale decline.

And here the lovers met, what hour
The bee departed from the flower,

And droop'd the bud at being left,
Or as ashamed of each sweet theft,
What hour the soft wind bore along
The nightingale's moonlighted song.

And AMIRALD heard her father's name,
He whose it was, was link'd with fame:
Though driven from his heritage,
A hunted exile in his age,
For that he would not bend the knee,
And draw the sword at Rome's decree.

She led him to the lonely cot,
And almost AMIRALD wish'd his lot
Had been cast in that humbler life,
Over whose peace the hour of strife

Passes but like the storm at sea
That wakes not earth's tranquillity.

In secret were they wed, not then
Had AMIRALD power to fling again
The banner of defiance wide
To priestly pomp and priestly pride;
But day by day more strong his hand,
And more his friends, and soon the brand
That in its wrongs and silence slept
Had from its blood-stain'd scabbard leapt.
But here are told such varying tales
That none may know where truth prevails;
For there were hints of murder done,
And deeds of blood that well might shun
All knowledge; but the wildest one

Was most believed: 'twas whisper'd round
Lord AMIRALD in hunting found
An evil spirit, but array'd
In semblance of a human maid;
That 'twas some holy word whose force
Broke off their sinful intercourse.
But this is sure, one evening late
Lord AMIRALD reach'd his castle gate,
And blood was on his spurs of gold,
And blood was on his mantle's fold,—
He flung it back, and on his arm
A fair young child lay pillow'd warm;
It stretch'd its little hands and smiled,
And AMIRALD said it was his child,
And bade the train their aid afford
Suiting the daughter of their Lord.

Then sought his brother, but alone;
Yet there were some who heard a tone
Of stifled agony, a prayer
His child should meet a father's care;
And as he past the hall again
He call'd around his vassal train,
And bade them own his brother's sway.
Then past himself like a dream away,—
And from that hour none heard his name,
No tale, no tidings of him came,
Save a vague murmur, that he fell
In fighting with the Infidel.

But his fair child grew like a flower
Springing in March's earlier hour,
'Mid storm and chill, yet loveliest—
Though somewhat paler than the rest.

Perhaps it was her orphan'd state,
So young, so fair, so desolate,—
Somewhat of likeness in their fate
Made RAYMOND'S heart for her confess
Its hidden depths of tenderness.
Neglected both; and those that pine
In love's despair and hope's decline,
Can love the most when some sweet spell
Breaks the seal on affection's well,
And bids its waters flow like light
Returning to the darken'd sight.
And while his fallen fortunes taught
RAYMOND'S proud solitude of thought,
His spirit's cold, stern haughtiness
In her was gentle mournfulness.
The cold north wind which bows to earth
The lightness of the willow's birth

Bends not the mountain cedar trees;
Folding their branches from the breeze,
They stand as if they could defy
The utmost rage of storm and sky.
And she, she would have thought it sin
To harbour one sweet thought within,
In whose delight he had no part,—
He was the world of her young heart.
A childish fondness, yet revealing
Somewhat of woman's deeper feeling,—
Else wherefore is that crimson blush,
As her cheek felt her bosom's rush
Upon her face, while pausing now
Her eyes are raised to RAYMOND'S brow,
Who, lute-waked to a ballad old,
A legend of the fair and bold.

BALLAD.

He raised the golden cup from the board,
It sparkled with purple wealth,
He kist the brim her lip had prest,
And drank to his ladye's health.

Ladye, to-night I pledge thy name,
To-morrow thou shalt pledge mine;
Ever the smile of beauty should light
The victor's blood-red wine.

There are some flowers of brightest bloom
Amid thy beautiful hair,
Give me those roses, they shall be
The favour I will wear.

For ere their colour is wholly gone,
Or the breath of their sweetness fled,
They shall be placed in thy curls again,
But dy'd of a deeper red.

The warrior rode forth in the morning light,
And beside his snow-white plume
Were the roses wet with the sparkling dew,
Like pearls on their crimson bloom.

The maiden stood on her highest tower,
And watch'd her knight depart;
She dash'd the tear aside, but her hand
Might not still her beating heart.

All day she watch'd the distant clouds
Float on the distant air,

A crucifix upon her neck,
And on her lips a prayer.

The sun went down, and twilight came
With her banner of pearlin grey,
And then afar she saw a band
Wind down the vale their way.

They came like victors, for high o'er their ranks
Were their crimson colours borne;
And a stranger penon droop'd beneath,
But that was bow'd and torn:

But she saw no white steed first in the ranks,
No rider that spurr'd before;
But the evening shadows were closing fast,
And she could see no more.

She turn'd from her watch on the lonely tower
In haste to reach the hall,
And as she sprang down the winding stair
She heard the drawbridge fall.

A hundred harps their welcome rung,
Then paused as if in fear;
The ladye enter'd the hall, and saw
Her true knight stretch'd on his bier!

The song ceased, yet not with its tone
Is the minstrel's vision wholly flown;
But there he stood as if he had sent
His spirit to rove on the element.

But Eva broke on his trance, and the while
Play'd o'er her lip a sigh and a smile ;—
" Now turn thee from that evening sky,
And the dreaming thoughts that are passing by,
And give me those buds, thou hast pluck'd away
The leaves of the rose round which they lay;
Yet still the boon thrice fair will be,
And give them for my tidings to me.
A herald waits in the court to claim
Aid in the Lady of Clarin's name;
And well you know the fair Clotilde
Will have her utmost prayer fulfill'd.
Go to the hall at once, and ask
That thine may be the glorious task
To spread the banner to the day
And lead the vassals to the fray."—

He rush'd to the crowded hall, and there
He heard the herald's words declare
The inroad on her lands, the wrong
The lonely Countess suffer'd long,
And now SIR HERBERT'S arm'd array
Before her very castle lay;
But surely there was many a knight
Whose sword would strike for lady's right;
And surely many a lover's hand
In such a cause would draw the brand.

And rush'd the blood, and flash'd the light
To RAYMOND'S cheek, from RAYMOND'S eye,
When he stood forth and claim'd the fight,
And spoke of death and victory,

Those words that thrill the heart when first
Forth the young warrior's soul has burst.
And smiled the castle lord to see
His ward's impetuous energy.

"Well! get thy sword, the dawning day
Shall see thee lead my best array;
Suits it young warrior well to fight
For lady's cause and lady's right?
'Tis just a field for knight to win
His maiden spurs and honours in."

And RAYMOND felt as if a gush
Of thousand waters in one rush
Were on his heart, as if the dreams
Of what, alas! life only seems,

Wild thoughts and noontide revelries,
Were turn'd into realities.
Impatient, restless, first his steed
Was hurried to its utmost speed:
And next his falchion's edge was tried,
Then waved the helmet's plume of pride,
Then wandering through the courts and hall,
He paused in none yet pass'd through all.

But there was one whose gentle heart
Could ill take its accustom'd part
In RAYMOND's feelings, one who deem'd
That almost unkind RAYMOND seem'd:—
If thus the very name of war,
Could fill so utterly each thought,

How durst she hope, that when afar
Eva would be to memory brought.
Oh, she had yet the task to learn
How often woman's heart must turn
To feed upon its own excess
Of deep yet passionate tenderness!
How much of grief the heart must prove
That yields a sanctuary to love!

And ever since the crimson day
Had faded into twilight grey,
She had been in the gallery, where
Hung, pictured, knight and lady fair,
Where haughty brow, and lovely face,
Show'd youth and maiden of her race.

With both it was a favourite spot,
And names and histories which had not
A record save in the dim light
Tradition throws on memory's night
To them were treasures; they could tell
What from the first crusade befell.

There could not be a solitude
More fitted for a pensive mood
Than this old gallery,—the light
Of the full moon came coldly bright—
A silvery stream, save where a stain
Fell from the pictured window pane,—
A ruby flush, a purple dye,
Like the last sun-streak on the sky,
And lighted lip, and cheek of bloom
Almost in mockery of the tomb.

How sad, how strange to think the shade,
The copy faint of beauty made,
Should be the only wreck that death
Shall leave of so much bloom and breath.
The cheek, long since the earth-worm's prey,
Beside the lovely of to-day
Here smiles as bright, as fresh, as fair,
As if of the same hour it were.

There pass'd a step along the hall,
And Eva started as if all
Her treasures, secret until now,
Burnt in the blush upon her brow.
There was a something in their meeting,
A conscious trembling in her greeting,
As coldness from his eye might hide
The struggle of her love and pride;

Then fears of all too much revealing
Vanish'd with a reproachful feeling.

What, coldness! when another day
And RAYMOND would be far away,
When that to-morrow's rising sun
Might be the last he look'd upon!

"Come, EVA, dear! by the moonlight
We 'll visit all our haunts to night.
I could not lay me down to rest,
For, like the feathers in my crest,
My thoughts are waving to and fro.
Come, EVA, dear! I could not go
Without a pilgrimage to all
Of garden, nook, and waterfall,—

Where, amid birds, and leaves, and flowers,
And gales that cool'd the sunny hours,
With legend old, and plaining song,
We found not summer's day too long."

Through many a shadowy spot they past,
Looking its loveliest and its last,
Until they paused beneath the shade
Of cypress and of roses made,—
The one so sad, the one so fair,
Just blent as love and sorrow are.
And RAYMOND pray'd the maiden gather,
And twine in a red wreath together
The roses. "No," she sigh'd, "not these
Sweet children of the sun and breeze,
Born for the beauty of a day,
Dying as all fair things decay

When loveliest,—these may not be,
RAYMOND, my parting gift to thee."
From next her heart, where it had lain,
She took an amber scented chain,
To which a cross of gold was hung,
And round the warrior's neck she flung
The relique, while he kiss'd away
The warm tears that upon it lay.
And mark'd they not the pale, dim sky
Had lost its moonlit brilliancy,
When suddenly a bugle rang,—
Forth at its summons RAYMOND sprang,
But turn'd again to say farewell
To her whose gushing teardrops fell
Like summer rain,—but he is gone!
And EVA weeps, and weeps alone.

Dark was the shade of that old tower
In the grey light of morning's hour;
And cold and pale the maiden leant
Over the heavy battlement,
And look'd upon the armed show
That hurrying throng'd the court below:
With her white robe and long bright hair,
A golden veil flung on the air,
Like Peace prepared from earth to fly,
Yet pausing, ere she wing'd on high,
In pity for the rage and crime
That forced her to some fairer clime.
When suddenly her pale cheek burn'd,
For RAYMOND's eye to her's was turn'd;
But like a meteor past its flame—
She was too sad for maiden shame.

She heard the heavy drawbridge fall,
And RAYMOND rode the first of all;
But when he came to the green height
Which hid the castle from his sight,
With useless spur and slacken'd rein,
He was the laggard of the train.
They paused upon the steep ascent,
And spear, and shield, and breast-plate sent
A light, as if the rising day
Upon a mirror flash'd its ray.
They pass on, EVA only sees
A chance plume waving in the breeze,
And then can see no more—but borne
Upon the echo, came the horn;
At last nor sight nor sound declare
Aught of what pass'd that morning there.

Sweet sang the birds, light swept the breeze,
And play'd the sunlight o'er the trees,
And roll'd the river's depths of blue
Quiet as they were wont to do.
And EVA felt as if of all
Her heart were sole memorial.

THE TROUBADOUR.

CANTO II.

THE TROUBADOUR.

CANTO II.

THE first, the very first; oh! none
Can feel again as they have done;
In love, in war, in pride, in all
The planets of life's coronal,
However beautiful or bright,—
What can be like their first sweet light?

When will the youth feel as he felt,
When first at beauty's feet he knelt?

As if her least smile could confer
A kingdom on its worshipper;
Or ever care, or ever fear
Had cross'd love's morning hemisphere.
And the young bard, the first time praise
Sheds its spring sunlight o'er his lays,
Though loftier laurel, higher name,
May crown the minstrel's noontide fame,
They will not bring the deep content
Of his lute's first encouragement.
And where the glory that will yield
The flush and glow of his first field
To the young chief? Will RAYMOND ever
Feel as he now is feeling?—Never.

The sun went down or ere they gain'd
The glen where the chief band remain'd.

It was a lone and secret shade,
As nature form'd an ambuscade
For the bird's nest and the deer's lair,
Though now less quiet guests were there.
On one side like a fortress stood
A mingled pine and chesnut wood;
Autumn was falling, but the pine
Seem'd as it mock'd all change; no sign
Of season on its leaf was seen,
The same dark gloom of changeless green.
But like the gorgeous Persian bands
'Mid the stern race of northern lands,
The chesnut boughs were bright with all
That gilds and mocks the autumn's fall.

Like stragglers from an army's rear
Gradual they grew, near and less near,

Till ample space was left to raise,
Amid the trees, the watch-fire's blaze;
And there, wrapt in their cloaks around,
The soldiers scatter'd o'er the ground.

One was more crowded than the rest,
And to that one was RAYMOND prest;—
There sat the chief: kind greetings came
At the first sound of RAYMOND's name.
" Am I not proud that this should be,
Thy first field to be fought with me:
Years since thy father's sword and mine
Together dimm'd their maiden shine.
We were sworn brothers; when he fell
'Twas mine to hear his last farewell:
And how revenged I need not say,
Though few were left to tell that day.—

Thy brow is his, and thou wilt wield
A sword like his in battle-field.
Let the day break, and thou shalt ride
Another RAYMOND by my side;
And thou shalt win and I confer,
To-morrow, knightly brand and spur."

With thoughts of pride, and thoughts of grief,
Sat RAYMOND by that stranger chief,
So proud to hear his father's fame,
So sad to hear that father's name,
And then to think that he had known
That father by his name alone;
And aye his heart within him burn'd
When his eye to DE VALENCE turn'd,

Mark'd his high step, his warlike mien,—
"And such my father would have been!"

A few words of years past away,
A few words of the coming day,
They parted, not that night for sleep;
RAYMOND had thoughts that well might keep
Rest from his pillow,—memory, hope,
In youth's horizon had full scope
To blend and part each varied line
Of cloud and clear, of shade and shine.
—He rose and wander'd round, the light
Of the full moon fell o'er each height;
Leaving the wood behind in shade,
O'er rock, and glen, and rill it play'd.

He follow'd a small stream whose tide
Was bank'd by lilies on each side,
And there, as if secure of rest,
A swan had built her lonely nest;
And spread out was each lifted wing,
Like snow or silver glittering.
Wild flowers grew around the dale,
Sweet children of the sun and gale;
From every crag the wild vine fell,
To all else inaccessible;
And where a dark rock rose behind,
Their shelter from the northern wind,
Grew myrtles with their fragrant leaves,
Veil'd with the web the gossamer weaves,
So pearly fair, so light, so frail,
Like beauty's self more than her veil.—

And first to gaze upon the scene,
Quiet as there had never been
Heavier step than village maid
With flowers for her nuptial braid,
Or louder sound than hermit's prayer,
To crush its grass or load its air.
Then to look on the armed train,
The watch-fire on the wooded plain,
And think how with the morrow's dawn,
Would banner wave, and blade be drawn;
How clash of steel, and trumpet's swell,
Would wake the echoes of each dell.
—And thus it ever is with life,
Peace sleeps upon the breast of Strife,
But to be waken'd from its rest,
Till comes that sleep the last and best.

And RAYMOND paused at last, and laid
Himself beneath a chesnut's shade,
A little way apart from all,
That he might catch the waterfall,
Whose current swept like music round,—
When suddenly another sound
Came on the ear; it was a tone,
Rather a murmur than a song,
As he who breathed deem'd all unknown
The words, thoughts, echo bore along.
Parting the boughs which hung between,
Close, thick, as if a tapestried screen,
RAYMOND caught sight of a white plume
Waving o'er brow and cheek of bloom;
And yet the song was sad and low,
As if the chords it waked were woe.

SONG OF THE YOUNG KNIGHT.

Your scarf is bound upon my breast,
Your colours dance upon my crest,—
They have been soil'd by dust and rain,
And they must wear a darker stain.

I mark'd thy tears as fast they fell,
I saw but heard not thy farewell,
I gave my steed the spur and rein,—
I dared not look on thee again.

My cheek is pale, but not with fears,
And I have dash'd aside my tears;
This woman's softness of my breast
Will vanish when my spear 's in rest.

I know that farewell was our last,
That life and love from me are past;
For I have heard the fated sign
That speaks the downfall of our line.

I slept the soldier's tired sleep;
But yet I heard the music sweep,
Dim, faint, as when I stood beside
The bed whereon my father died.

Farewell, sweet love! never again
Will thine ear listen to the strain
With which so oft at midnight's hour
I've waked the silence of thy bower.

Farewell! I would not tears should stain
Thy fair cheek with their burning rain:

Tears, sweet! would an ill offering be
To one whose death was worthy thee.

RAYMOND thought on that song next day
When bleeding that young warrior lay,
While his hand, in its death-pang, prest
A bright curl to his wounded breast.

AND waning stars, and brightening sky,
And on the clouds a crimson dye,
And fresher breeze, and opening flowers,
Tell the approach of morning hours.

Oh, how can breath, and light, and bloom,
Herald a day of death and doom!
With knightly pennons, which were spread
Like mirror's for the morning's red,
Gather the ranks, while shout and horn
Are o'er the distant mountains borne.

'Twas a fair sight, that arm'd array
Winding through the deep vale their way,
Helmet and breast-plate gleaming in gold,
Banners waving their crimson fold,
Like clouds of the day-break: hark to the peal
Of the war-cry, answer'd by clanging steel!
The young chief strokes his courser's neck,
The ire himself had provoked to check,

Impatient for that battle plain
He may reach but never leave again;
And with flashing eye and sudden start,
  He hears the trumpet's stately tone,
Like the echo of his beating heart,
  And meant to rouse his ear alone.
And by his side the warrior grey,
With hair as white as the plumes that play
Over his head, yet spurs he as proud,
As keen as the youngest knight of the crowd:
And glad and glorious on they ride
In strength and beauty, power and pride.
And such the morning, but let day
Close on that gallant fair array,
The moon will see another sight
Than that which met the dawning light.—

Look on that field,—'tis the battle field!
Look on what harvest victory will yield!
There the steed and his rider o'erthrown,
Crouch together, their warfare is done:
The bolt is undrawn, the bow is unbent,
And the archer lies like his arrow spent.
Deep is the banner of crimson dyed,
But not with the red of its morning pride;
Torn and trampled with soil and stain,
When will it float on the breeze again;—
And over the ghastly plain are spread,
Pillow'd together, the dying and dead.

There lay one with an unclosed eye
Set in bright, cold vacancy,
While on its fix'd gaze the moonbeam shone,
Light mocking the eye whose light was gone;

And by his side another lay,
The life-blood ebbing fast away,
But calm his cheek and calm his eye,
As if leant on his mother's bosom to die.
Too weak to move, he feebly eyed
A wolf and a vulture close to his side,
Watching and waiting, himself the prey,
While each one kept the other away.

Little of this the young warrior deems
When, with heart and head all hopes and dreams,
He hastes for the battle:—The trumpet's call
Waken'd RAYMOND the first of all;
His the first step that to stirrup sprung,
His the first banner upwards flung;
And brow and cheek with his spirit glow'd,
When first at DE VALENCE's side he rode.

The quiet glen is left behind,
The dark wood lost in the blue sky;
When other sounds come on the wind,
And other pennons float on high.
With snow-white plumes and glancing crest,
And standard raised, and spear in rest,
On a small river's farther banks
Wait their approach Sir HERBERT's ranks.—
One silent gaze, as if each band
Could slaughter both with eye and hand.
Then peals the war-cry! then the dash
Amid the waters! and the crash
Of spears,—the falchion's iron ring,—
The arrow hissing from the string,
Tell they have met. Thus from the height
The torrent rushes in its might.

With the lightning's speed, the thunder's peal,
Flashes the lance, and strikes the steel.
Many a steed to the earth is borne,
Many a banner trampled and torn;
Or ever its brand could strike a blow,
Many a gallant arm lies low;—
Many a scarf, many a crest,
Float with the leaves on the river's breast;
And strange it is to see how around
Buds and flowers strew the ground,
For the banks were cover'd with wild rose trees,
Oh! what should they do amid scenes like these.

In the blue stream, as it hover'd o'er,
A hawk was mirror'd, and before
Its wings could reach yon pine, which stands
A bow-shot off from the struggling bands,

The stain of death was on the flood,
And the red waters roll'd dark with blood.—
RAYMOND'S spear was the first that flew,
He the first who dash'd the deep river through;
His step the first on the hostile strand,
And the first that fell was borne down by his hand.

The fight is ended:—the same sun
Has seen the battle lost and won;
The field is cover'd with dying and dead,
With the valiant who stood, and the coward who fled.
And a gallant salute the trumpets sound,
As the warriors gather from victory around.

On a hill that skirted the purple flood,
With his peers around, DE VALENCE stood,

And with bended knee, and forehead bare,
Save its cloud of raven hair,
And beautiful as some wild star
Come in its glory and light from afar,
With his dark eyes flashing stern and bright,
And his cheek o'erflooded with crimson light,
And the foeman's banner over his head,
His first field's trophy proudly spread,
Knelt RAYMOND down his boon to name,—
The knightly spurs he so well might claim:
And a softness stole to DE VALENCE'S eyes,
As he bade the new-made knight arise.—
From his own belt he took the brand,
And gave it into RAYMOND'S hand,
And said it might a memory yield
Of his father's friend, and his own first field.

Pleasant through the darkening night
Shines from Clarin's towers the light.
Home from the battle the warriors ride,
In the soldiers' triumph, and soldiers' pride:
The drawbridge is lower'd, and in they pour,
Like the sudden rush of a summer shower,
While the red torch-light bursts through the gloom,
Over banner and breast-plate, helm and plume.

Sudden a flood of lustre play'd
Over a lofty ballustrade,
Music and perfume swept the air,
Messengers sweet for the spring to prepare;
And like a sunny vision sent
For worship and astonishment,
Aside a radiant ladye flung
The veil that o'er her beauty hung.

With stately grace to those below,
She bent her gem encircled brow,
And bade them welcome in the name
Of her they saved, the castle's dame,
Who had not let another pay
Thanks, greeting to their brave array,—
But she had vow'd the battle night
To fasting, prayer, and holy rite.

On the air the last tones of the music die,
The odour passes away like a sigh,
The torches flash a parting gleam,
And she vanishes as she came, like a dream.
But many an eye dwelt on the shade,
Till fancy again her form display'd,
And still again seem'd many an ear
The softness of her voice to hear.

And many a heart had a vision that night,
Which future years never banish'd quite.

And sign and sound of festival
Are ringing through that castle hall;
Tapers, whose flame send a perfumed cloud,
Flash their light o'er a gorgeous crowd;
With a thousand colours the tapestry falls
Over the carved and gilded walls,
And, between, the polish'd oak pannels bear,
Like dark mirrors, the image of each one there.
At one end the piled up hearth is spread
With sparkling embers of glowing red:
Above the branching antlers have place,
Sign of many a hard won chase;
And beneath, in many a polish'd line,
The arms of the hunter and warrior shine;

And around the fire, like a laurell'd arch,
Raised for some victor's triumphal march,
The wood is fretted with tracery fair,
And green boughs and flowers are waving there.
Lamps, like faery planets shine,
O'er massive cups of the genial wine,
And shed a ray more soft and fair
Than the broad red gleam of the torch's glare;
And, flitting like a rainbow, plays
In beautiful and changing rays,
When from the pictured windows fall
The colour'd shadows o'er the hall;
As every pane some bright hue lent
To vary the lighted element.

The ladye of the festive board
Was ward to the castle's absent lord;

The Ladye ADELINE,—the same
Bright vision that with their greeting came
Maidens four stood behind her chair,
Each one was young, and each one fair;
Yet they were but as the stars at night
When the moon shines forth in her fullness of light
On the knot of her wreathed hair was set
A blood-red ruby coronet;
But among the midnight cloud of curls
That hung o'er her brow were eastern pearls,
As if to tell their wealth of snow,
How white her forehead could look below.
Around her floated a veil of white,
Like the silvery rack round the star of twilight;
And down to the ground her mantle's fold
Spread its length of purple and gold;

And sparkling gems were around her arm,
That shone like marble, only warm,
With the blue veins wandering tide,
And the hand with its crimson blush inside.
A zone of precious stones embraced
The graceful circle of her waist,
Sparkling as if they were proud
Of the clasp to them allow'd.
But yet there was 'mid this excess
Of soft and dazzling loveliness,
A something in the eye, and hand,
And forehead, speaking of command:
An eye whose dark flash seem'd allied
To even more than beauty's pride,—
A hand as only used to wave
Its sign to worshipper and slave,—

A forehead, but that was too fair
To read of aught but beauty there!

And RAYMOND had the place of pride,
The place so envied by her side,—
The victor's seat,—and overhead
The banner he had won was spread.
His health was pledged!—he only heard
The murmur of one silver word;
The pageant seem'd to fade away,
Vanish'd the board and glad array,
The gorgeous hall around grew dim,
There shone one only light for him,
That radiant form, whose brightness fell
In power upon him like a spell,

Laid in its strength by Love to reign
Despotic over heart and brain.
Silent he stood amid the mirth,
Oh, love is timid in its birth!
Watching her lightest look or stir,
As he but look'd and breathed with her.
Gay words were passing, but he leant
In silence; yet, one quick glance sent,—
His secret is no more his own,
When has woman her power not known?

The feast broke up:—that midnight shade
Heard many a gentle serenade
Beneath the ladye's lattice. One
Breathed after all the rest were gone.

SERENADE.

Sleep, ladye! for the moonlit hour,
Like peace, is shining on thy bower;
It is so late, the nightingale
Has ended even his love tale.

Sleep, ladye! 'neath thy turret grows,
Cover'd with flowers, one pale white rose;
I envy its sweet sighs, they steep
The perfumed airs that lull thy sleep.

Perchance, around thy chamber floats
The music of my lone lute notes,—
Oh, may they on thine eyelids fall,
And make thy slumbers musical!

Sleep, ladye! to thy rest be given
The gleamings of thy native heaven,
And thoughts of early paradise,
The treasures of thy sleeping eyes.

I NEED not say whose was the song
The sighing night winds bore along.
RAYMOND had left the maiden's side
As one too dizzy with the tide
To breast the stream, or strive, or shrink,
Enough for him to feel, not think;
Enough for him the dim sweet fear,
The twilight of the heart, or ere
Awakening hope has named the name
Of love, or blown its spark to flame.

Restlessness, but as the winds range
From leaf to leaf, from flower to flower;
Changefulness, but as rainbows change,
From colour'd sky to sunlit hour.
Ay, well indeed may minstrel sing,—
What have the heart and year like spring?

Her vow was done: the castle dame
Next day to join the revellers came;
And never had a dame more gay
O'er hall or festival held sway.
And youthful knight, and ladye fair,
And juggler quaint, and minstrel rare,
And mirth, and crowds, and music, all
Of pleasure gather'd at her call.

And RAYMOND moved as in a dream
Of song and odour, bloom and beam,
As he dwelt in a magic bower,
Charm'd from all by fairy power.
—And ADELINE rode out that morn,
With hunting train, and hawk, and horn;
And broider'd rein, and curb of gold,
And housings with their purple fold
Decked the white steed o'er which she leant
Graceful as a young cypress, bent
By the first summer wind: she wore
A cap the heron plume waved o'er,
And round her wrist a golden band,
Which held the falcon on her hand.
The bird's full eye, so clear, so bright,
Match'd not her own's dark flashing light.

And RAYMOND, as he watch'd the dyes
Of her cheek rich with exercise,
Could almost deem her beauty's power
Was now in its most potent hour;
But when at night he saw her glance
The gayest of the meteor dance,
The jewels in her braided hair,
Her neck, her arms of ivory bare,
The silver veil, the broider'd vest,—
Look'd she not then her loveliest?
Ah, every change of beauty's face
And beauty's shape has its own grace!
That night his heart throbb'd when her hand
Met his touch in the saraband:
That night her smile first bade love live
On the sweet life that hope can give.—

Beautiful, but thrice wayward, wild,
Capricious as a petted child,
She was all chance, all change; but now
A smile is on her radiant brow,—
A moment and that smile is fled,
Coldness and scorn are there instead.

Ended the dance, and ADELINE
Flung herself, like an eastern queen,
Upon the cushions which were laid
Amid a niche of that gay hall,
Hid from the lamps; around it play'd
The softness of the moonlight fall.
And there the gorgeous shapes past by
But like a distant pageantry,
In which you have yourself no share,
For all its pride, and pomp, and care.

She pass'd her hand across the chords
Of a lute near, and with soft words
Answer'd; then said, " no, thou shalt sing
Some legend of the fair and brave."
To RAYMOND's hand the lute she gave,
Whose very soul within him burn'd
When her dark eye on his was turn'd:
One moment's pause, it slept not long,—
His spirit pour'd itself in song.

ELENORE.

THE lady sits in her lone bower,
With cheek wan as the white rose flower
That blooms beside, 'tis pale and wet
As that rose with its dew pearls set.

Her cheek burns with a redder dye,
Flashes light from her tearful eye;
She has heard pinions beat the air,
She sees her white dove floating there;
And well she knows its faithful wing,
The treasure of her heart will bring;
And takes the gentle bird its stand
Accustom'd on the maiden's hand,
With glancing eye and throbbing breast,
As if rejoicing in its rest.
She read the scroll,—" dear love, to-night
By the lake, all is there for flight
What time the moon is down;—oh, then
My own life shall we meet again!"
One upward look of thankfulness,
One pause of joy, one fond caress

Of her soft lips, as to reward
The messenger of EGINHARD.

That night in her proud father's hall
She shone the fairest one of all;
For like the cloud of evening came
Over her cheek the sudden flame,
And varying as each moment brought
Some hasty change of secret thought;
As if its colour would confess
The conscious heart's inmost recess.
And the clear depths of her dark eye
Were bright with troubled brilliancy,
Yet the lids droop'd as with the tear
Which might oppress but not appear.
And flatteries, and smile and sigh
Loaded the air as she past by.

It sparkled, but her jewell'd vest
Was crost above a troubled breast:
Her curls, with all their sunny glow,
Were braided o'er an aching brow:
But well she knew how many sought
To gaze upon her secret thought;—
And Love is proud,—she might not brook
That other's on her heart should look.
But there she sate, cold, pale, and high,
Beneath her purple canopy;
And there was many a mutter'd word,
And one low whisper'd name was heard,—
The name of EGINHARD,—that name
Like some forbidden secret came.

The theme went, that he dared to love
One like a star his state above;

Here to the princess turn'd each eye,—
And it was said, he did not sigh
With love that pales the pining cheek,
And leaves the slighted heart to break.
And then a varying tale was told,
How a page had betray'd for gold;
But all was rumour light and vain,
That all might hear, but none explain.

Like one that seeks a festival,
Early the princess left the hall;
Yet said she, sleep dwelt on her eyes,
That she was worn with revelries.
And hastily her maidens' care
Unbinds the jewels from her hair.
Odours are round her chamber strown,
And ELENORE is left alone.

With throbbing heart, whose pulses beat
Louder than fall her ivory feet,
She rises from her couch of down;
And, hurriedly, a robe is thrown
Around her form, and her own hand
Lets down her tresses golden band.
Another moment she has shred
Those graceful tresses from her head.
There stands a plate of polish'd steel,
She folds her cloak as to conceal
Her strange attire, for she is drest
As a young page in dark green vest.
Softly she steps the balustrade,
Where myrtle, rose, and hyacinth made
A passage to the garden shade.

It was a lovely summer night,
The air was incense-fill'd, the light
Was dim and tremulous, a gleam,
When a star, mirror'd on the stream,
Sent a ray round just to reveal
How gales from flower to flower steal.
"It was on such a night as this,
When even a single breath is bliss,
Such a soft air, such a mild heaven,
My vows to EGINHARD were given."
Sigh'd ELENORE, "Oh, might it be
A hope, a happy augury!"

She reach'd the lake,—a blush, a smile,
Contended on her face the while;

And safely in a little cove,
Shelter'd by willow trees above,
An ambuscade from all secured,
Her lover's little boat lay moor'd.—
One greeting word, with muffled oar,
And silent lip, they left that shore.

It was most like a phantom dream
To see that boat flit o'er the stream,
So still, that but yet less and less
It grew, it had seem'd motionless.
And then the silent lake, the trees
Visible only when the breeze
Aside the shadowy branches threw,
And let one single star shine through,
While the faint glimmer scarcely gave
To view the wanderers of the wave.

The breeze has borne the clouds away
That veil'd the blushes of young day;
The lark has sung his morning song;—
Surely the princess slumbers long.
And now it is the accustom'd hour
Her royal father seeks her bower,
When her soft voice and gentle lute,
The snowfall of her fairy foot,
The flowers she has cull'd, with dew
Yet moist upon each rainbow hue;
The fruits with bloom upon their cheek,
Fresh as the morning's first sun streak;
Each, all conspired to wile away
The weariness of royal sway.

But she is gone: there hangs her lute,
And there it may hang lone and mute:

The flowers may fade, for who is there
To triumph now if they are fair:
There are her gems,—oh, let them twine
An offering round some sainted shrine!
For she who wore them may not wear
Again those jewels in her hair.

At first the monarch's rage was wild;
But soon the image of his child,
In tenderness rose on his heart,
How could he bear from it to part?
And anger turn'd to grief: in vain
Ambition had destroy'd the chain
With which love had bound happiness.
In vain remorse, in vain redress,—
Fruitless all search. And years past o'er,
No tidings came of ELENORE,

Although the king would have laid down
His golden sceptre, purple crown,
His pomp, his power, but to have prest
His child one moment to his breast.

And where was ELENORE? her home
Was now beneath the forest dome;—
A hundred knights had watch'd her hall,
Her guards were now the pine trees tall:
For harps waked with the minstrel tale,
Sang to her sleep the nightingale:
For silver vases, where were blent
Rich perfumes from Arabia sent,
Were odours when the wild thyme flower
Wafted its sweets on gale and shower:
For carpets of the purple loom
The violets spread their cloud of bloom,

Starr'd with primroses; and around
Boughs like green tapestry swept the ground.
—And there they dwelt apart from all
That gilds and mocks ambition's thrall;
Apart from cities, crowds, and care,
Hopes that deceive, and toils that wear;
For they had made themselves a world
Like that or ever man was hurl'd
From his sweet Eden, to begin
His bitter course of grief and sin.—
And they were happy; EGINHARD
Had won the prize for which he dared
Dungeon and death; but what is there
That the young lover will not dare?
And she, though nurtured as a flower,
The favourite bud of a spring bower,

Daughter of palaces, yet made
Her dwelling place in the green shade;
Happy, as she remember'd not
Her royal in her peasant lot,—
With gentle cares, and smiling eyes
As love could feel no sacrifice.
Happy her ivory brow to lave
Without a mirror but the wave,
As one whose sweetness could dispense
With all save its own excellence;—
A fair but gentle creature, meant
For heart, and hearth, and home content.

It was at night the chase was over,
And ELENORE sat by her lover,—
Her lover still, though years had fled
Since their first word of love was said,—

When one sought, at that darksome hour,
The refuge of their lonely bower,
A hunter who, amid the shade,
Had from his own companions stray'd.
And Elenora gazed on his face,
And knew her father! In the chase
Often the royal mourner sought
A refuge from his one sad thought.
He knew her not,—the lowly mien,
The simple garb of forest green,
The darken'd brow, which told the spoil
The sun stole from her daily toil,
The cheek where woodland health had shed
The freshness of its morning red,—
All was so changed. She spread the board,
Her hand the sparkling wine cup pour'd;

And then around the hearth they drew,
And cheerfully the woodfire threw
Its light around.—Bent o'er her wheel
Scarcely dared ELENORE to steal
A look, half tenderness, half fear,
Yet seem'd he as he loved to hear
Her voice, as if it had a tone
Breathing of days and feelings gone.

"Ah! surely," thought she, "Heaven has sent
My father here, as that it meant
Our years of absence ended now!"
She gazed upon his soften'd brow;
And the next moment, all revealing,
ELENORE at his feet is kneeling!—

Need I relate that, reconciled,
The father bless'd his truant child.

WHERE is the heart that has not bow'd
A slave, eternal Love, to thee:
Look on the cold, the gay, the proud,
And is there one among them free?
The cold, the proud,—oh! Love has turn'd
The marble till with fire it burn'd;
The gay, the young,—alas that they
Should ever bend beneath thy sway!
Look on the cheek the rose might own,
The smile around like sunshine thrown;
The rose, the smile, alike are thine,
To fade and darken at thy shrine.

And what must love be in a heart
All passion's fiery depths concealing,
Which has in its minutest part
More than another's whole of feeling.

And RAYMOND'S heart; love's morning sun
On fitter altar never shone;
Loving with all the snow-white truth,
That is found but in early youth;
Freshness of feeling as of flower,
That lives not more than spring's first hour;
And loving with that wild devotion,
That deep and passionate emotion,
With which the minstrel soul is thrown
On all that it would make its own.

And RAYMOND loved; the veriest slave
That e'er his life to passion gave:
Upon his ear no murmur came
That seem'd not echoing her name;
The lightest colour on her cheek
Was lovelier than the morning break.
He gazed upon her as he took
His sense of being from her look:—
Sometimes it was idolatry,
Like homage to some lovely star,
Whose beauty though for hope too high,
He yet might worship from afar.
At other times his heart would swell
With tenderness unutterable:
He would have borne her to an isle
Where May and June had left their smile;

And there, heard but by the lone gale,
He would have whisper'd his love tale;
And without change, or cloud, or care,
Have kept his bosom's treasure there.
And then, with all a lover's pride,
He thought it shame such gem to hide:
And imaged he a courtly scene
Of which she was the jewell'd queen,—
The one on whom each glance was bent,
The beauty of the tournament,
The magnet of the festival,
The grace, the joy, the life of all.—
But she, alas for her false smile!
ADELINE loved him not the while.

And is it thus that woman's heart
Can trifle with its dearest part,

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Its own pure sympathies?—can fling
The poison'd arrow from the string
In utter heartlessness around,
And mock, or think not of the wound!
And thus can woman barter all
That makes and gilds her gentle thrall,—
The blush which should be like the one
White violets hide from the sun,—
The soft, low sighs, like those which breathe
In secret from a twilight wreath,—
The smile like a bright lamp, whose shine
Is vow'd but only to one shrine;
All these sweet spells,—and can they be
Weapons of reckless vanity?
And woman, in whose gentle heart
From all save its sweet self apart,

Love should dwell with that purity
Which but in woman's love can be:
A sacred fire, whose flame was given
To shed on earth the light of heaven,—
That she can fling her wealth aside
In carelessness, or sport, or pride!

It was not form'd for length of bliss,
A dream so fond, so false as this;
Enough for ADELINE to win
The heart she had no pleasure in,—
Enough that bright eyes turn'd in vain
On him who bow'd beneath her chain:—
Then came the careless word and look,
All the fond soul so ill can brook,
The jealous doubt, the burning pain,
That rack the lover's heart and brain;

The fear that will not own it fear,
The hope that cannot disappear;
Faith clinging to its visions past,
And trust confiding to the last.
And thus it is: ay, let Love throw
Aside his arrows and his bow;
But let him not with one spell part,
The veil that binds his eyes and heart.
Woe for Love when his eyes shall be
Open'd upon reality!

One day a neighbouring baron gave
A revel to the fair and brave,—
And knights upon their gallant steeds,
And ladies on their palfreys gray,
All shining in their gayest weeds,
Held for the festival their way.

A wanderer on far distant shores,
That baron had brought richest stores
To his own hall, and much of rare
And foreign luxury was there:
Pages, with colour'd feathers, fann'd
The odours of Arabia's land;
The carpets strewn around each room
Were all of Persia's purple loom;
And dark slaves waited on his guests,
Each habited in Moorish vests,
With turbann'd brows, and bands of gold
Around their arms and ancles roll'd.
And gazed the guests o'er many a hoard,
Like Sinbad's, from his travel stored.
They look'd upon the net work dome,
Where found the stranger birds a home,

With rainbow wings and gleaming eyes,
Seen only beneath Indian skies.
At length they stood around the ring,
Where stalk'd, unchain'd, the forest king,
With eyes of fire and mane erect,
As if by human power uncheck'd.

Full ill had RAYMOND's spirit borne
The wayward mood, the careless scorn,
With which his mistress had that day
Trifled his happiness away.—
His very soul within him burn'd,
When, as in chance, her dark eye turn'd
On him, she spoke in reckless glee,—
" Is there a knight who, for love of me,
Into the court below will spring,
And bear from the lion the glove I fling?"

A shriek!—a pause,—then loud acclaim
Rose to the skies with RAYMOND's name.
Oh, worthy of a lady's love!
RAYMOND has borne away the glove.
He laid the prize at the maiden's feet,
Then turn'd from the smile he dared not meet:
A moment more he is on the steed,
The spur has urged to its utmost speed,
As that he could fly from himself, and all
The misery of his spirit's thrall.

The horse sank down, and RAYMOND then
Started to see the foaming rein,
The drops that hung on the courser's hide,
And the rowel's red trace on its panting side;
And deep shame mingled with remorse,
As he brought the cool stream to his fallen horse.

The spot where he paused was a little nook,
Like a secret page in nature's book,—
Around were steeps where the wild vine
Hung, wreathed in many a serpentine,
Wearing each the colour'd sign
Of the autumn's pale decline.
Like a lake in the midst was spread
A grassy sweep of softest green,
Smooth, flower-dropt, as no human tread
Upon its growth had ever been.
Limes rose around, but lost each leaf,
Like hopes luxuriant but brief;
And by their side the sycamore
Grew prouder of its scarlet store:
The air was of that cold clear light
That heralds in an autumn night,—

The amber west had just a surge
Of crimson on its utmost verge;
And on the east were piled up banks
Where darkness gather'd with her ranks
Of clouds, and in the midst a zone
Of white with transient brightness shone
From the young moon, who scarcely yet
Had donn'd her lighted coronet.

With look turn'd to the closing day,
As he watch'd every hue decay,
Sat RAYMOND; and a passer by
Had envied him his reverie;—
But nearer look had scann'd his brow,
And started at its fiery glow,
As if the temples' burning swell
Had made their pulses visible.

Too glazed, too fix'd, his large eyes shone
To see aught that they gazed upon.
Not his the paleness that may streak
The lover's or the minstrel's cheek,
As it had its wan colour caught
From moods of melancholy thought;
'Twas that cold, dark, unearthly shade,
But for a corpse's death look made;
Speaking that desperateness of pain,
As one more pang, and the rack'd brain
Would turn to madness; one more grief,
And the swoln heart breaks for relief.

Oh, misery! to see the tomb
Close over all our world of bloom;
To look our last in the dear eyes
Which made our light of paradise;

To know that silent is the tone
Whose tenderness was all our own;
To kiss the cheek which once had burn'd
At the least glance, and find it turn'd
To marble; and then think of all
Of hope, that memory can recall.
Yes, misery! but even here
There is a somewhat left to cheer,
A gentle treasuring of sweet things
  Remembrance gathers from the past,
The pride of faithfulness, which clings
  To love kept sacred to the last.
And even if another's love
Has touch'd the heart to us above
The treasures of the cast, yet still
There is a solace for the ill.

Those who have known love's utmost spell
Can feel for those who love as well;
Can half forget their own distress,
To share the loved one's happiness.
Oh, but to know our heart has been,
Like the toy of an Indian queen,
Torn, trampled, without thought or care,—
Where is despair like this despair!—

All night beneath an oak he lay,
Till nature blush'd bright into day;
When, at a trumpet's sudden sound,
Started his courser from the ground:
And his loud neigh waked RAYMOND'S dream,
And, gazing round, he saw the gleam
Of arms upon a neighbouring height,
Where helm and cuirass stream'd in light.

As RAYMOND rose from his unrest
He knew DE VALENCE's falcon crest;
And the red cross that shone like a glory afar,
Told the warrior was vow'd to the holy war.

"Ay, this," thought RAYMOND, "is the strife
To make my sacrifice of life;
What is it now to me that fame
Shall brighten over RAYMOND's name;
There is no gentle heart to bound,
No cheek to mantle at the sound:
Lady's favour no more I wear,—
My heart, my helm—oh! what are there?
A blighted hope, a wither'd rose.
Surely this warfare is for those
Who only of the victory crave
A holy but a nameless grave."

Short greeting past; DE VALENCE read
All that the pale lip left unsaid;
On the wan brow, in the dimm'd eye,
The whole of youth's despondency,
Which at the first shock it has known
Deems its whole world of hope o'erthrown.
And it was fix'd, that at Marseilles,
Where the fleet waited favouring gales,
RAYMOND should join the warrior train,
Leagued 'gainst the infidels of Spain.

They parted:—Over RAYMOND'S thought
Came sadness mingled too with shame;
When suddenly his memory brought
The long forgotten EVA'S name.
Oh! Love is like the mountain tide,
Sweeping away all things beside,

Till not another trace appears
But its own joys, and griefs, and fears.
He took her cross, he took her chain
From the heart where they still had lain;
And that heart felt as if its fate
Had sudden grown less desolate,
In thus remembering love that still
Would share and sooth in good and ill.

He spurr'd his steed; but the night fall
Had darken'd ere he reach'd the hall;
And gladly chief and vassal train
Welcomed the youthful knight again.
And many praised his stately tread,
His face with darker manhood spread;
But of those crowding round him now,
Who mark'd the paleness of his brow,

But one, who paused till they were past,
Who look'd the first but spoke the last:
Her welcome in its timid fear
Fell almost cold on RAYMOND'S ear;
A single look,—he felt he gazed
Upon a gentle child no more,
The blush that like the lightning blazed,
The cheek then paler than before,
A something of staid maiden grace,
A cloud of thought upon her face;
She who had been, in RAYMOND'S sight,
A plaything, fancy, and delight,—
Was changed: the depth of her blue eye
Spoke to him now of sympathy,
And seem'd her melancholy tone
A very echo of his own;

And that pale forehead, surely care
Has graved an early lesson there.

They roved through many a garden scene,
Where other, happier days had been;
And soon had RAYMOND told his all
Of hopes, like stars but bright to fall;
Of feelings blighted, changed, and driven
Like exiles from their native heaven;
And of an aimless sword, a lute
Whose chords were now uncharm'd and mute.
But EVA's tender blandishing
Was as the April rays, that fling
A rainbow till the thickest rain
Melts into blue and light again.

There is a feeling in the heart
Of woman which can have no part
In man; a self devotedness,
As victims round their idols press,
And asking nothing, but to show
How far their zeal and faith can go.
Pure as the snow the summer sun
Never at noon hath look'd upon,—
Deep as is the diamond wave,
Hidden in the desart cave,—
Changeless as the greenest leaves
Of the wreath the cypress weaves,—
Hopeless often when most fond,
Without hope or fear beyond
Its own pale fidelity,—
And this woman's love can be!

And RAYMOND although not again
Dreaming of passion's burning chain,
Yet felt that life had still dear things
To which the lingering spirit clings.
More dear, more lovely EVA shone
In thinking of that faithless one;
And read he not upon the cheek
All that the lip might never speak,
All the heart cherish'd yet conceal'd,
Scarce even to itself reveal'd.
And RAYMOND, though with heart so torn
By anger, agony, and scorn,
Might ill bear even with love's name,
Yet felt the maiden's hidden flame
Come like the day-star in the east,
When every other light has ceased;

Sent from the bosom of the night
To harbinger the morning light.

Again they parted: she to brood
O'er dreaming hopes in solitude,
And every pitying saint to pray
For RAYMOND on the battle day.
And he no longer deem'd the field
But death to all his hopes could yield.
To other, softer dreams allied,
He thought upon the warrior's pride.
But as he pass'd the castle gate
He left so wholly desolate,
His throbbing pulse, his burning brain,
The sudden grasp upon the rein,
The breast and lip that gasp'd for air,
Told Love's shaft was still rankling there.

That night, borne o'er the bounding seas,
The vessel swept before the breeze,
Loaded the air, the war-cry's swell,
Woe to the Moorish infidel;
And raising their rich hymn, a band
Of priests were kneeling on the strand,
To bless the parting ship, and song
Came from the maidens ranged along
The sea wall, and who incense gave,
And flowers, like offerings to the wave
That bore the holy and the brave.

And RAYMOND felt his spirit rise,
And burn'd his cheek, and flash'd his eyes
With something of their ancient light,
While plume and pennon met his sight;

While o'er the deep swept the war-cry,
And peal'd the trumpet's voice on high,
While the ship rode the waves as she
Were mistress of their destiny.
And muster'd on the deck the band,
Till died the last shout from the strand;
But when the martial pomp was o'er,
And, like the future, dim the shore
On the horizon hung, again
Closed RAYMOND's memory, like a chain
The spirit struggles with in vain.

The sky with its delicious blue,
The stars like visions wandering through:
Surely, if Fate had treasured there
Her rolls of life, they must be fair;

The mysteries their glories hide
Must be but of life's brightest side;
It cannot be that Fate would write
Her dark decrees in lines of light.
And RAYMOND mused upon the hour
When, comrade of the star and flower,
He watch'd beside his lady's bower;
He number'd every hope and dream,
Like blooms that threw upon life's stream
Colours of beauty, and then thought
On knowledge, all too dearly bought;
Feelings lit up in waste to burn,
Hopes that seem but shadows fair,
All that the heart so soon must learn,
All that it finds so hard to bear.

The young moon's vestal lamp that hour
Seem'd pale as that it pined for love;
No marvel such a night had power,
So calm below, so fair above,
To wake the spirit's finest chords
Till minstrel thoughts found minstrel words.

THE LAST SONG.

It is the latest song of mine
That ever breathes thy name,
False idol of a dream-raised shrine,
Thy very thought is shame,—
Shame that I could my sprit bow
To one so very false as thou.

I had past years where the green wood
Makes twilight of the noon,
And I had watch'd the silver flood
Kiss'd by the rising moon;
And gazed upon the clear midnight
In all its luxury of light.

And, thrown where the blue violets dwell,
I would pass hours away,
Musing o'er some old chronicle
Fill'd with a wild love lay;
Till beauty seem'd to me a thing
Made for all nature's worshipping.

I saw thee, and the air grew bright
In thy clear eyes' sunshine;

I oft had dream'd of shapes of light,
But not of shape like thine.
My heart bow'd down,—I worshipp'd thee,
A woman and a deity.

I may not say how thy first look
Turn'd my whole soul to flame,
I read it as a glorious book
Fill'd with high deeds of fame;
I felt a hero's spirit rise,
Unknown till lighted at thine eyes.

False look, false hope, and falsest love!
All meteors sent to me
To show how they the heart could move,
And how deceiving be:

They left me, darken'd, crush'd, alone,
My bosom's household gods o'erthrown.

The world itself was changed, and all
That I had loved before
Seem'd as if gone beyond recall,
And I could hope no more;
The scar of fire, the dint of steel,
Are easier than Love's wounds to heal.

But this is past, and I can cope
With what I'd fain forget;
I have a sweet, a gentle hope
That lingers with me yet,—
A hope too fair, too pure to be
Named in the words that speak of thee.

Henceforth within the last recess
Of my heart shall remain
Thy name in all its bitterness,
But never named again;
The only memory of that heart
Will be to think how false thou art.

And yet I fain would name thy name,
My heart's now gentle queen,
E'en as they burn the perfumed flame
Where the plague spot has been;
Methinks that it will cleanse away
The ills that on my spirit prey.

Sweet Eva! the last time I gazed
Upon thy deep blue eyes,

The cheek whereon my look had raised
A blush's crimson dyes,
I marvell'd, love, this heart of mine
Had worshipp'd at another shrine.

I will think of thee when the star,
That lit our own fair river,
Shines in the blue sky from afar,
As beautiful as ever;
That twilight star, sweet love, shall be
A sign and seal with thee and me!

THE TROUBADOUR.

CANTO III.

THE TROUBADOUR.

CANTO III.

LAND of the olive and the vine,
The saint and soldier, sword and shrine!
How glorious to young RAYMOND's eye
Swell'd thy bold heights, spread thy clear sky,
When first he paused upon the height
Where, gather'd, lay the Christian might.
Amid a chesnut wood were raised
Their white tents, and the red cross blazed

Meteor-like, with its crimson shine,
O'er many a standard's scutcheon'd line.

On the hill opposite there stood
The warriors of the Moorish blood,—
With their silver crescents gleaming,
And their horse-tail pennons streaming;
With cymbals and the clanging gong,
The muezzin's unchanging song,
The turbans that like rainbows shone,
The coursers' gay caparison,
As if another world had been
Where that small rivulet ran between.

And there was desperate strife next day:
The little vale below that lay

Was like a slaughter-pit, of green
Could not one single trace be seen;
The Moslem warrior stretch'd beside
The Christian chief by whom he died;
And by the broken falchion blade
The crooked scymeter was laid.

And gallantly had RAYMOND borne
The red cross through the field that morn,
When suddenly he saw a knight
Oppress'd by numbers in the fight:
Instant his ready spear was flung,
Instant amid the band he sprung;—
They fight, fly, fall,—and from the fray
He leads the wounded knight away!
Gently he gain'd his tent, and there
He left him to the leech's care;

Then sought the field of death anew,—
Little was there for knight to do.

That field was strewn with dead and dying;
And mark'd he there De Valence lying
Upon the turbann'd heap, which told
How dearly had his life been sold.
And yet on his curl'd lip was worn
The impress of a soldier's scorn;
And yet his dark and glazed eye
Glared its defiance stern and high:
His head was on his shield, his hand
Held to the last his own red brand.
Felt Raymond all too proud for grief
In gazing on the gallant chief:
So, thought he, should a warrior fall,
A victor dying last of all.

But sadness moved him when he gave
De Valence to his lowly grave,—
The grave where the wild flowers were sleeping,
And one pale olive-tree was weeping,—
And placed the rude stone cross to show
A Christian hero lay below.

With the next morning's dawning light
Was Raymond by the wounded knight.
He heard strange tales,—none knew his name,
And none might say from whence he came;
He wore no cognizance, his steed
Was raven black, and black his weed.
All owned his fame, but yet they deem'd
More desperate than brave he seem'd;
Or as he only dared the field
For the swift death that it might yield.

Leaning beside the curtain, where
Came o'er his brow the morning air,
He found the stranger chief; his tone,
Surely 'twas one RAYMOND had known!
He knew him not, what chord could be
Thus waken'd on his memory?

At first the knight was cold and stern,
As that his spirit shunn'd to learn
Aught of affection; as it brought
To him some shaft of venom'd thought:
When one eve RAYMOND chanced to name
Durance's castle, whence he came;
And speak of EVA, and her fate,
So young and yet so desolate,
So beautiful! Then heard he all
Her father's wrongs, her mother's fall:

For AMIRALD was the knight whose life
RAYMOND had saved amid the strife;
And now he seem'd to find relief
In pouring forth his hidden grief,
Which had for years been as the stream
Cave-lock'd from either air or beam.

LORD AMIRALD'S HISTORY.

I LOVED her! ay, I would have given
A death-bed certainty of heaven
If I had thought it could confer
The least of happiness on her!
How proudly did I wait the hour
When hid no more in lowly bower,
She should shine, loveliest of all,
The lady of my heart and hall;—

And soon I deem'd the time would be,
For many a chief stood leagued with me.

It was one evening we had sate
In my tower's secret council late,
Our bands were number'd, and we said
That the pale moon's declining head
Should shed her next full light o'er bands
With banners raised, and sheathless brands.
We parted; I to seek the shade
Where my heart's choicest gem was laid;
I flung me on my fleetest steed,
I urged it to its utmost speed,—
On I went, like the hurrying wind,
Hill, dale, and plain were left behind,
And yet I thought my courser slow—
Even when the forest lay below.

As my wont, in a secret nook
I left my horse,—I may not tell
With what delight my way I took
Till I had reach'd the oak-hid dell.
The trees which hitherto had made
A more than night, with lighten'd shade
Now let the stars and sky shine through,
Rejoicing, calm, and bright, and blue.

There did not move a leaf that night
That I cannot remember now,
Nor yet a single star whose light
Was on the royal midnight's brow:
Wander'd no cloud, sigh'd not a flower,
That is not present at this hour.
No marvel memory thus should press
Round its last light of happiness!

I paused one moment where I stood,
In all a very miser's mood,
As if that thinking of its store
Could make my bosom's treasure more.
I saw the guiding lamp which shone
From the wreath'd lattice, pale and lone;
Another moment I was there,
To pause, and look—upon despair.

I saw her!—on the ground she lay,
The life blood ebbing fast away;
But almost as she could not die
Without my hand to close her eye!
When to my bosom press'd, she raised
Her heavy lids, and feebly gazed,
And her lip moved: I caught its breath,
Its last, it was the gasp of death!

I leant her head upon my breast,
As I but soothed her into rest;—
I do not know what time might be
Past in this stony misery,
When I was waken'd from my dream
By my forgotten infant's scream.
Then first I thought upon my child.
I took it from its bed, it smiled,
And its red cheek was flush'd with sleep:
Why had it not the sense to weep?
I laid its mother on the bed,
O'er her pale brow a mantle spread,
And left the wood. Calm, stern, and cold,
The tale of blood and death I told;
Gave my child to my brother's care
As his, not mine were this despair.

I flung me on my steed again,
I urged him with the spur and rein,—
I left him at the usual tree,
But left him there at liberty.

With madd'ning step I sought the place,
I raised the mantle from her face,
And knelt me down beside, to gaze
On all the mockery death displays,
Until it seem'd but sleep to me.
Death,—oh, no! death it could not be.

The cold grey light the dawn had shed,
Changed gradual into melting red;
I watch'd the morning colour streak
With crimson dye her marble cheek;

The freshness of the stirring air
Lifted her curls of raven hair:
Her head lay pillow'd on her arm,
Sweetly, as if with life yet warm;—
I kiss'd her lips: oh, God, the chill!
My heart is frozen with it still:—
It was as suddenly on me
Open'd my depths of misery.
I flung me on the ground, and raved,
And of the wind that past me craved
One breath of poison, till my blood
From lip and brow gush'd in one flood.
I watch'd the warm stream of my veins
Mix with the death wounds clotted stains;
Oh! how I pray'd that I might pour
My heart's tide, and her life restore!

And night came on:—with what dim fear
I mark'd the darkling hours appear,—
I could not gaze on the dear brow,
And seeing was all left me now.
I grasp'd the cold hand in mine own,
Till both alike seem'd turn'd to stone.
Night, morn, and noontide pass'd away,
Then came the tokens of decay.

'Twas the third night that I had kept
My watch, and, like a child, had wept
Sorrow to sleep, and in my dream
I saw her as she once could seem,
Fair as an angel: there she bent
As if sprung from the element,
The bright clear fountain, whose pure wave
Her soft and shadowy image gave.

Methought that conscious beauty threw
Upon her cheek its own sweet hue,
Its loveliness of morning red;
I woke, and gazed upon the dead.
I mark'd the fearful stains which now
Were dark'ning o'er the once white brow,
The livid colours that declare
The soul no longer dwelleth there.
The gaze of even my fond eye,
Seem'd almost like impiety,
As it were sin for looks to be
On what the earth alone should see.
I thought upon the loathsome doom
Of the grave's cold, corrupted gloom;—
Oh, never shall the vile worm rest
A lover on thy lip and breast!

Oh, never shall a careless tread
Soil with its step thy sacred bed!
Never shall leaf or blossom bloom
With vainest mockery o'er thy tomb!

And forth I went, and raised a shrine
Of the dried branches of the pine,—
I laid her there, and o'er her flung
The wild flowers that around her sprung;
I tore them up, and root and all,
I bade them wait her funeral,
With a strange joy that each fair thing
Should, like herself, be withering.
I lit the pyre,—the evening skies
Rain'd tears upon the sacrifice;
How did its wild and awful light
Struggle with the fierce winds of night;

Red was the battle, but in vain
Hiss'd the hot embers with the rain.
It wasted to a single spark;
That faded, and all round was dark:
Then, like a madman who has burst
The chain which made him doubly curst,
I fled away. I may not tell
The agony that on me fell:—
I fled away, for fiends were near,
My brain was fire, my heart was fear!

I was borne on an eagle's wing,
Till with the noon-sun perishing;
Then I stood in a world alone,
From which all other life was gone,
Whence warmth, and breath, and light were fled,
A world o'er which a curse was said:

The trees stood leafless all, and bare,
The sky spread, but no sun was there:
Night came, no stars were on her way,
Morn came without a look of day,—
As night and day shared one pale shroud,
Without a colour or a cloud.
And there were rivers, but they stood
Without a murmur on the flood,
Waveless and dark, their task was o'er,—
The sea lay silent on the shore,
Without a sign upon its breast
Save of interminable rest:
And there were palaces and halls,
But silence reign'd amid their walls,
Though crowds yet fill'd them; for no sound
Rose from the thousands gather'd round;

All wore the same white, bloodless hue,
All the same eyes of glassy blue,
Meaningless, cold, corpse-like as those
No gentle hand was near to close.
And all seem'd, as they look'd on me,
In wonder that I yet could be
A moving shape of warmth and breath
Alone amid a world of death.

'Tis strange how much I still retain
Of these wild tortures of my brain,
Though now they but to memory seem
A curse, a madness, and a dream;
But well I can recall the hour
When first the fever lost its power;
As one whom heavy opiates steep,
Rather in feverish trance than sleep,

I waken'd scarce to consciousness,—
Memory had fainted with excess:
I only saw that I was laid
Beneath an olive tree's green shade;
I knew I was where flowers grew fair,
I felt their balm upon the air,
I drank it as it had been wine;
I saw a gift of red sunshine
Glittering upon a fountain's brim;
I heard the small birds' vesper hymn,
As they a vigil o'er me kept,—
I heard their music, and I wept.
I felt a friendly arm upraise
My head, a kind look on me gaze!

Raymond, it has been mine to see
The godlike heads which Italy

Has given to prophet and to saint,
All of least earthly art could paint!
But never saw I such a brow
As that which gazed upon me now;—
It was an aged man, his hair
Was white with time, perhaps with care;
For over his pale face were wrought
The characters of painful thought;
But on that lip and in that eye
Were patience, peace, and piety,
The hope which was not of this earth,
The peace which has in pangs its birth,
As if in its last stage the mind,
Like silver seven times refined
In life's red furnace, all its clay,
All its dross purified away,

Paused yet a little while below,
Its beauty and its power to show.
As if the tumult of this life,
Its sorrow, vanity, and strife,
Had been but as the lightning's shock
Shedding rich ore upon the rock,
Though in the trial scorch'd and riven,
The gold it wins is gold from heaven.
He watch'd, he soothed me day to day,
How kindly words may never say:
All angel ministering could be
That old man's succour was to me;
I dwelt with him; for all in vain
He urged me to return again
And mix with life:—and months past on
Without a trace to mark them gone;

I had one only wish, to be
Left to my grief's monotony.
There is a calm which is not peace,
Like that when ocean's tempests cease,
When worn out with the storm, the sea
Sleeps in her dark tranquillity,
As dreading that the lightest stir
Would bring again the winds on her.
I felt as if I could not brook
A sound, a breath, a voice, a look,
As I fear'd they would bring again
Madness upon my heart and brain.
It was a haunting curse to me,
The simoom of insanity.
The links of life's enchanted chain,
Its hope, its pleasure, fear or pain,

Connected but with what had been,
Clung not to any future scene.
There is an indolence in grief
Which will not even seek relief:
I sat me down, like one who knows
The poison tree above him grows,
Yet moves not; my life-task was done
With that hour which left me alone.

It was one glad and glorious noon,
Fill'd with the golden airs of June,
When leaf and flower look to the sun
As if his light and life were one,—
A day of those diviner days
When breath seems only given for praise,
Beneath a stately tree which shed
A cool green shadow over-head;

I listen'd to that old man's words
Till my heart's pulses were as chords
Of a lute waked at the command
Of some thrice powerful master's hand.
He paused: I saw his face was bright
With even more than morning's light,
As his cheek felt the spirit's glow;
A glory sate upon his brow,
His eye flash'd as to it were given
A vision of his coming heaven.
I turn'd away in awe and fear,
My spirit was not of his sphere;
Ill might an earthly care intrude
Upon such high and holy mood:
I felt the same as I had done
Had angel face upon me shone,

When sudden, as sent from on high,
Music came slowly sweeping by.
It was not harp, it was not song,
Nor aught that might to earth belong!
The birds sang not, the leaves were still,
Silence was sleeping on the rill;
But with a deep and solemn sound
The viewless music swept around.
Oh never yet was such a tone
To hand or lip of mortal known!
It was as if a hymn were sent
From heaven's starry instrument,
In joy, such joy as seraphs feel
For some pure soul's immortal weal,
When that its human task is done,
Earth's trials past, and heaven won.

I felt, before I fear'd, my dread,
I turn'd and saw the old man dead!
Without a struggle or a sigh,
And is it thus the righteous die?
There he lay in the sun, calm, pale,
As if life had been like a tale
Which, whatsoe'er its sorrows past,
Breaks off in hope and peace at last.

I stretch'd him by the olive tree,
Where his death, there his grave should be;
The place was a thrice hallowed spot,
There had he drawn his golden lot
Of immortality; 'twas blest,
A green and holy place of rest.

But ill my burthen'd heart could bear
Its after loneliness of care;
The calmness round seem'd but to be
A mockery of grief and me,—
The azure flowers, the sunlit sky,
The rill, with its still melody,
The leaves, the birds,—with my despair,
The light and freshness had no share:
The one unbidden of them all
To join in summer's festival.

I wander'd first to many a shrine
By zeal or ages made divine;
And then I visited each place
Where valour's deeds had left a trace;
Or sought the spots renown'd no less
For nature's lasting loveliness.

In vain that all things changed around,
No change in my own heart was found.
In sad or gay, in dark or fair,
My spirit found a likeness there.

At last my bosom yearn'd to see
My Eva's blooming infancy;
I saw, myself unseen the while,
Oh, God! it was her mother's smile!
Wherefore, oh, wherefore had they flung
The veil just as her mother's hung!—
Another look I dared not take,
Another look my heart would break!
I rush'd away to the lime grove
Where first I told my tale of love;
And leaves and flowers breathed of spring
As in our first sweet wandering.

I look'd towards the clear blue sky,
I saw the gem-like stream run by;
How did I wish that, like these, fate
Had made the heart inanimate.
Oh! why should spring for others be,
When there can come no spring to thee.

Again, again, I rush'd away;
Madness was on an instant's stay!
And since that moment, near and far,
In rest, in toil, in peace, in war,
I've wander'd on without an aim
In all, save lapse of years the same.
Where was the star to rise and shine
Upon a night so dark as mine?—
My life was as a frozen stream,
Which shares but feels not the sun-beam,

All careless where its course may tend,
So that it leads but to an end.
I fear my fate too much to crave
More than it must bestow—the grave.

And Amirald from that hour sought
A refuge from each mournful thought
In Raymond's sad but soothing smile;
And listening what might well beguile
The spirit from its last recess
Of dark and silent wretchedness.
He spoke of Eva, and he tried
To rouse her father into pride
Of her fair beauty; rather strove
To waken hope yet more than love.

He saw how deeply AMIRALD fear'd
To touch a wound not heal'd but sear'd:
His gentle care was not in vain,
And AMIRALD learn'd to think again
Of hope, if not of happiness;
And soon his bosom pined to press
The child whom he so long had left
An orphan doubly thus bereft.
He mark'd with what enamour'd tongue
RAYMOND on EVA's mention hung,—
The softened tone, the downward gaze,
All that so well the heart betrays;
And a reviving future stole
Like dew and sunlight on his soul.

Soon the Crusaders would be met
Where winter's rest from war was set;

And then farewell to arms and Spain;—
Then for their own fair France again.

One morn there swell'd the trumpet's blast,
Calling to battle, but the last;
And AMIRALD watch'd the youthful knight
Spur his proud courser to the fight:
Tall as the young pine yet unbent
By strife with its mountain element,—
His vizor was up, and his full dark eye
Flash'd as its flashing were victory;
And hope and pride sate on his brow
As his earlier war-dreams were on him now.
Well might he be proud, for where was there one
Who had won the honour that he had won?
And first of the line it was his to lead
His band to many a daring deed.

But rose on the breath of the evening gale,
Not the trumpet's salute, but a mournful tale
Of treachery, that had betray'd the flower
Of the Christian force to the Infidel's power.
One came who told he saw RAYMOND fall,
Left in the battle the last of all;
His helm was gone, and his wearied hand
Held a red but a broken brand.—
What could a warrior do alone?
And AMIRALD felt all hope was gone.
Alas for the young! alas for the brave!
For the morning's hope, and the evening's grave!
And gush'd for him hot briny tears,
Such as AMIRALD had not shed for years;—
With heavy step and alter'd heart,
Again he turn'd him to depart.

He sought his child, but half her bloom
Was withering in RAYMOND'S tomb.

Albeit not with those who fled,
Yet was not RAYMOND with the dead.
There is a lofty castle stands
On the verge of Grenada's lands;
It has a dungeon, and a chain,
And there the young knight must remain.
Day after day,—or rather night,—
Can morning come without its light?
Pass'd on without a sound or sight.
The only thing that he could feel,
Was the same weight of fettering steel,—
The only sound that he could hear
Was when his own voice mock'd his ear,—

His only sight was the drear lamp
That faintly show'd the dungeon's damp,
When by his side the jailor stood,
And brought his loathed and scanty food.

What is the toil, or care, or pain,
The human heart cannot sustain?
Enough if struggling can create
A change or colour in our fate;
But where 's the spirit that can cope
With listless suffering, when hope,
The last of misery's allies,
Sickens of its sweet self, and dies.

He thought on Eva:—tell not me
Of happiness in memory!

Oh! what is memory but a gift
Within a ruin'd temple left,
Recalling what its beauties were,
And then presenting what they are.
And many hours pass'd by,—each one
Sad counterpart of others gone;
Till even to his dreams was brought
The sameness of his waking thought;
And in his sleep he felt again
The dungeon, darkness, damp, and chain.

One weary time, when he had thrown
Himself on his cold bed of stone,
Sudden he heard a stranger hand
Undo the grating's iron band:
He knew 'twas stranger, for no jar
Came from the hastily drawn bar.

Too faintly gleam'd the lamp to show
The face of either friend or foe;
But there was softness in the tread,
And RAYMOND raised his weary head,
And saw a muffled figure kneel,
And loose the heavy links of steel.
He heard a whisper, to which heaven
Had surely all its music given:—
"Vow to thy saints for liberty,
Sir knight, and softly follow me!"
He heard her light step on the stair,
And felt 'twas woman led him there.
And dim and dark the way they past
Till on the dazed sight flash'd at last
A burst of light, and RAYMOND stood
Where censers burn'd with sandal wood,

And silver lamps like moonshine fell
O'er mirrors and the tapestried swell
Of gold and purple: on they went
Through rooms each more magnificent.

And RAYMOND look'd upon the brow
Of the fair guide who led him now:
It was a pale but lovely face,
Yet in its first fresh spring of grace,
That spring before or leaf or flower
Has known a single withering hour:
With lips red as the earliest rose
That opens for the bee's repose.
But it was not on lip, or cheek
Too marble fair, too soft, too meek,
That aught was traced that might express
More than unconscious loveliness;

But her dark eyes! as the wild light
Streams from the stars at deep midnight,
Speaks of the future,—so those eyes
Seem'd with their fate to sympathise,
As mocking with their conscious shade
The smile that on the red lip play'd,
As that they knew their destiny
Was love, and that such love would be
The uttermost of misery.

There came a new burst of perfume,
But different, from one stately room,
Not of sweet woods, waters distill'd,
But with fresh flowers' breathings fill'd;
And there the maiden paused, as thought
Some painful memory to her brought.

Around all spoke of woman's hand:
There a guitar lay on a stand
Of polish'd ebony, and raised
In rainbow ranks the hyacinth blazed
Like banner'd lancers of the spring,
Save that they were too languishing.
And gush'd the tears from her dark eyes,
And swell'd her lip and breast with sighs;
But RAYMOND spoke, and at the sound
The maiden's eye glanced hurried round.

Motioning with her hand she led,
With watching gaze and noiseless tread,
Along a flower-fill'd terrace, where
Flow'd the first tide of open air.
They reach'd the garden; there was all
That gold could win, or luxury call

From northern or from southern skies
To make an earthly paradise.
Their path was through a little grove,
Where cypress branches met above,
Green, shadowy, as nature meant
To make the rose a summer tent,
In fear and care, lest the hot noon
Should kiss her fragrant brow too soon.
Oh! passion's history, ever thus
Love's light and breath were perilous!
On the one side a fountain play'd
As if it were a Fairy's shade,
Who shower'd diamonds to streak
The red pomegranate's ruby cheek.
The grove led to a lake, one side
Sweet scented shrubs and willows hide:

There winds a path, the clear moonshine
Pierces not its dim serpentine.
The garden lay behind in light,
With flower and with fountain bright;
The lake like sheeted silver gave
The stars a mirror in each wave;
And distant far the torchlight fell,
Where paced the walls the centinel:
And as each scene met RAYMOND'S view,
He deem'd the tales of magic true,—
With such a path, and such a night,
And such a guide, and such a flight.

The way led to a grotto's shade,
Just for a noon in summer made;
For scarcely might its arch be seen
Through the thick ivy's curtain green,

And not a sunbeam might intrude
Upon its twilight solitude.
It was the very place to strew
The latest violets that grew
Upon the feathery moss, then dream,—
Lull'd by the music of the stream,—
Fann'd by those scented gales which bring
The garden's wealth upon their wing,
Till languid with its own delight,
Sleep steals like love upon the sight,
Bearing those visionings of bliss
That only visit sleep like this.

And paused the maid,—the moonlight shed
Its light where leaves and flowers were spread,
As there she had their sweetness borne,
A pillow for a summer morn;

But when those leaves and flowers were raised,
A lamp beneath their covering blazed.
She led through a small path whose birth
Seem'd in the hidden depths of earth,—
'Twas dark and damp, and on the ear
There came a rush of waters near.
At length the drear path finds an end,—
Beneath a dark low arch they bend;
"Safe, safe!" the maiden cried, and prest
The red cross to her panting breast!
"Yes, we are safe!—on, stranger, on,
The worst is past, and freedom won!
Somewhat of peril yet remains,
But peril not from Moorish chains;—
With hope and heaven be our lot!"
She spoke, but RAYMOND answer'd not:

It was as he at once had come
Into some star's eternal home,—
He look'd upon a spacious cave,
Rich with the gifts wherewith the wave
Had heap'd the temple of that source
Which gave it to its daylight course.
Here pillars crowded round the hall,
Each with a glistening capital:—
The roof was set with thousand spars,
A very midnight heaven of stars;
The walls were bright with every gem
That ever graced a diadem;
Snow turn'd to treasure,—crystal flowers
With every hue of summer hours.
While light and colour round him blazed,
It seem'd to RAYMOND that he gazed
Upon a fairy's palace, raised

By spells from ore and jewels, that shine
In Afric's stream and Indian mine;
And she, his dark-eyed guide, were queen
Alone in the enchanted scene.

They past the columns, and they stood
By the depths of a pitchy flood,
Where silent, leaning on his oar,
An Ethiop slave stood by the shore.
" My faithful ALI !" cried the maid,
And then to gain the boat essay'd,
Then paused, as in her heart afraid
To trust that slight and fragile bark
Upon a stream so fierce, so dark;
Such sullen waves, the torch's glare
Fell wholly unreflected there.

'Twas but a moment; on they went
Over the grave-like element;
At first in silence, for so drear
Was all that met the eye and ear,—
Before, behind, all was like night,
And the red torch's cheerless light,
Fitful and dim, but served to show
How the black waters roll'd below;
And how the cavern roof o'erhead
Seem'd like the tomb above them spread.
And ever as each heavy stroke
Of the oar upon these waters broke,
Ten thousand echoes sent the sound
Like omens through the hollows round,
Till RAYMOND, who awhile subdued
His spirit's earnest gratitude,

Now pour'd his hurried thanks to her,
Heaven's own loveliest minister.
E'en by that torch he could espy
The burning cheek, the downcast eye,—
The faltering lip, which owns too well
All that its words might never tell;—
Once her dark eye met his, and then
Sank 'neath its silken shade again;
She spoke a few short hurried words,
But indistinct, like those low chords
Waked from the lute or ere the hand
Knows yet what song it shall command.
Was it in maiden fearfulness
He might her bosom's secret guess,
Or but in maiden modesty
At what a stranger's thought might be

Of this a Moorish maiden's flight
In secret with a Christian knight.
And the bright colour on her cheek
Was various as the morning break,—
Now spring-rose red, now lily pale,
As thus the maiden told her tale.

MOORISH MAIDEN'S TALE.

Albeit on my brow and breast
Is Moorish turban, Moorish vest;
Albeit too of Moorish line,
Yet Christian blood and faith are mine.
Even from earliest infancy
I have been taught to bend the knee
Before the sweet Madonna's face,
To pray from her a Saviour's grace!

My mother's youthful heart was given
To one an infidel to heaven;
Alas! that ever earthly love
Could turn her hope from that above;
Yet surely 'tis for tears, not blame,
To be upon that mother's name.

Well can I deem my father all
That holds a woman's heart in thrall,—
In truth his was as proud a form
As ever stemm'd a battle-storm,
As ever moved first in the hall
Of crowds and courtly festival.
Upon each temple the black hair
Was mix'd with grey, as early care
Had been to him like age,—his eye,
And lip, and brow, were dark and high;

And yet there was a look that seem'd
As if at other times he dream'd
Of gentle thoughts he strove to press
Back to their unsunn'd loneliness.
Your first gaze cower'd beneath his glance,
Keen like the flashing of a lance,
As forced a homage to allow
To that tall form, that stately brow;
But the next dwelt upon the trace
That time may bring, but not efface,
Of cares that wasted life's best years,
Of griefs seared more than sooth'd by tears,
And homage changed to a sad feeling
For a proud heart its grief concealing.
If such his brow, when griefs that wear,
And hopes that waste, were written there,

What must it have been, at the hour
When in my mother's moonlit bower,
If any step moved, 'twas to take
The life he ventured for her sake?
He urged his love; to such a suit
Could woman's eye or heart be mute?
She fled with him,—it matters not,
To dwell at length upon their lot.
But that my mother's frequent sighs
Swell'd at the thoughts of former ties,
First loved, then fear'd she loved too well,
Then fear'd to love an Infidel;
A struggle all, she had the will
But scarce the strength to love him still:—
But for this weakness of the heart
Which could not from its love depart,

Rebell'd, but qnickly clung again,
Which broke and then renew'd its chain,
Without the power to love, and be
Repaid by love's fidelity:—
Without this contest of the mind,
Though yet its early fetters bind,
Which still pants to be unconfined,
They had been happy.

'Twas when first
My spirit from its childhood burst,
That to our roof a maiden came,
My mother's sister, and the same
In form, in face, in smiles, in tears,
In step, in voice, in all but years,
Save that there was upon her brow
A calm my mother's wanted now;

And that ELVIRA's loveliness
Seem'd scarce of earth, so passionless,
So pale, all that the heart could paint
Of the pure beauty of a saint.
Yes, I have seen ELVIRA kneel,
And seen the rays of evening steal,
Lighting the blue depths of her eye
With so much of divinity
As if her every thought was raised
To the bright heaven on which she gazed!
Then often I have deem'd her form
Rather with light than with life warm.

My father's darken'd brow was glad,
My mother's burthen'd heart less sad
With her, for she was not of those
Who all the heart's affections close

In a drear hour of grief or wrath,—
Her path was as an angel's path,
Known only by the flowers which spring
Beneath the influence of its wing;
And that her high and holy mood
Was such as suited solitude.
Still she had gentle words and smiles,
And all that sweetness which beguiles,
Like sunshine on an April day,
The heaviness of gloom away.
It was as the souls weal were sure
When prayer rose from lips so pure.

She left us;—the same evening came
Tidings of woe, and death, and shame.
Her guard had been attack'd by one
Whose love it had been her's to shun.

Fierce was the struggle, and her flight
Meanwhile had gain'd a neighbouring height,
Which dark above the river stood,
And look'd upon the rushing flood;
'Twas compass'd round, she was bereft
Of the vague hope that flight had left.
One moment, and they saw her kneel,
And then, as Heaven heard her appeal,
She flung her downwards from the rock:
Her heart was nerved by death to mock
What that heart never might endure,
The slavery of a godless Moor.

And madness in its burning pain
Seized on my mother's heart and brain:
She died that night, and the next day
Beheld my father far away.

But wherefore should I dwell on all
Of sorrow memory can recall,
Enough to know that I must roam
An orphan to a stranger home.—
My father's death in battle field
Forced me a father's rights to yield
To his stern brother; how my heart
Was forced with one by one to part
Of its best hopes, till life became
Existence only in its name;
Left but a single wish,—to share
The cold home where my parents were.

At last I heard, I may not say
How my soul brighten'd into day,
Elvira lived; a miracle
Had surely saved her as she fell!

A fisherman who saw her float,
Bore her in silence to his boat.
She lived! how often had I said
To mine own heart she is not dead;
And she remember'd me, and when
They bade us never meet again,
She sent to me an Ethiop slave,
The same who guides us o'er the wave,
Whom she had led to that pure faith
Which sains and saves in life and death,
And plann'd escape.

It was one morn
I saw our conquering standards borne,
And gazed upon a Christian knight
Wounded and prisoner from the fight;

I made a vow that he should be
Redeem'd from his captivity.
Sir knight, the Virgin heard my vow,—
Yon light,—we are in safety now!

THE arch was past, the crimson gleam
Of morning fell upon the stream,
And flash'd upon the dazzled eye
The day-break of a summer sky;
And they are sailing amid ranks
Of cypress on the river banks:
They land where water-lilies spread
Seem almost too fair for the tread;
And knelt they down upon the shore,
The heart's deep gratitude to pour.

Led by their dark guide on they press
Through many a green and lone recess:
The morning air, the bright sunshine,
To RAYMOND were like the red wine,—
Each leaf, each flower seem'd to be
With his own joy in sympathy,
So fresh, so glad; but the fair Moor,
From peril and pursuit secure,
Though hidden by her close-drawn veil,
Yet seem'd more tremulous, more pale;
The hour of dread and danger past,
Fear's timid thoughts came thronging fast;
Her cold hand trembled in his own,
Her strength seem'd with its trial gone,
And downcast eye, and faltering word,
But dimly seen, but faintly heard,

Seem'd scarcely her's that just had been
His dauntless guide through the wild scene.

At length a stately avenue
Of ancient chesnuts met their view,
And they could see the time-worn walls
Of her they sought, ELVIRA's halls.
A small path led a nearer way
Through flower-beds in their spring array.
They reach'd the steps, and stood below
A high and marble portico;
They enter'd, and saw kneeling there
A creature even more than fair.
On each white temple the dusk braid
Of parted hair made twilight shade,
That brow whose blue veins shone to show
It was more beautiful than snow.

Her large dark eyes were almost hid
By the nightfall of the fringed lid;
And tears which fill'd their orbs with light,
Like summer showers blent soft with bright.
Her cheek was saintly pale, as nought
Were there to flush with earthly thought;
As the heart which in youth had given
Its feelings and its hopes to Heaven,
Knew no emotions that could spread
A maiden's cheek with sudden red,—
Made for an atmosphere above,
Too much to bend to mortal love.

And RAYMOND watch'd as if his eye
Were on a young divinity,—

As her bright presence made him feel
Awe that could only gaze and kneel:
And LEILA paused, as if afraid
To break upon the recluse maid,
As if her heart took its rebuke
From that cold, calm, and placid look.

"ELVIRA!"—though the name was said
Low as she fear'd to wake the dead,
Yet it was heard, and, all revealing,
Of her most treasured mortal feeling,
Fondly the Moorish maid was prest
To her she sought, ELVIRA'S breast.
"I pray'd for thee, my hope, my fear,
My LEILA! and now thou art near.
Nay, weep not, welcome as thou art
To my faith, friends, and home and heart!"

And RAYMOND almost deem'd that earth
To such had never given birth
As the fair creatures, who, like light,
Floated upon his dazzled sight:—
One with her bright and burning cheek,
All passion, tremulous and weak,
A woman in her woman's sphere
Of joy and grief, of hope and fear.
The other, whose mild tenderness
Seem'd as less made to share than bless;
One to whom human joy was such
That her heart fear'd to trust too much,
While her wan brow seem'd as it meant
To soften rapture to content;—
To whom all earth's delight was food
For high and holy gratitude.

Gazed RAYMOND till his burning brain
Grew dizzy with excess of pain;
For unheal'd wounds his strength had worn,
And all the toil his flight had borne;
His lip, and cheek, and brow were flame;
And when ELVIRA's welcome came,
It fell on a regardless ear,
As bow'd beside a column near,
He leant insensible to all
Of good or ill that could befall.

THE TROUBADOUR.

CANTO IV.

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It was a wild and untrain'd bower,
Enough to screen from April shower,
Or shelter from June's hotter hour,
Tapestried with starry jessamines,
The summer's gold and silver mines;
With a moss seat, and its turf set
With crowds of the white violet.
And close beside a fountain play'd,
Dim, cool, from its encircling shade;

And lemon trees grew round, as pale
As never yet to them the gale
Had brought a message from the sun
To say their summer task was done.
It was a very solitude
For love in its despairing mood,
With just enough of breath and bloom,
With just enough of calm and gloom,
To suit a heart where love has wrought
His wasting work, with saddest thought;
Where all its sickly fantasies
May call up suiting images:
With flowers like hopes that spring and fade
As only for a mockery made,
And shadows of the boughs that fall
Like sorrow drooping over all.

And LEILA, loveliest! can it be
Such destiny is made for thee?
Yes, it is written on thy brow
The all thy lip may not avow,—
All that in woman's heart can dwell,
Save by a blush unutterable.
Alas! that ever RAYMOND came
To light thy cheek and heart to flame,—
A hidden fire, but not the less
Consuming in its dark recess.

She had leant by his couch of pain,
When throbbing pulse and bursting vein
Fierce spoke the fever, when fate near
Rode on the tainted atmosphere;
And though that parch'd lip spoke alone
Of other love, in fondest tone,

And though the maiden knew that death
Might be upon his lightest breath,
Yet never by her lover's side
More fondly watch'd affianced bride,—
With pain or fear more anxious strove,
Than LEILA watch'd another's love.

But he was safe!—that very day
Farewell, it had been her's to say;
And he was gone to his own land,
To seek another maiden's hand.

Who that had look'd on her that morn,
Could dream of all her heart had borne;
Her cheek was red, but who could know
'Twas flushing with the strife below;—

eye was bright, but who could tell
If shone with tears she strove to quell;—
Her voice was gay, her step was light;
And, beaming, beautiful, and bright,
It was as if life could confer
Nothing but happiness on her.
Ah! who could think that all so fair
Was semblance, and but misery there.

'Tis strange with how much power and pride
The softness is of love allied;
How much of power to force the breast
To be in outward show at rest,—
How much of pride that never eye
May look upon its agony!
Ah! little will the lip reveal
Of all the burning heart can feel.

But this was past, and she was now
With clasped hands prest to her brow,
And head bow'd down upon her knee,
And heart-pulse throbbing audibly,
And tears that gush'd like autumn rain,
The more for that they gush'd in vain.
Oh! why should woman ever love,
Trusting to one false star above;
And fling her little chance away
Of sunshine for its treacherous ray.

At first ELVIRA had not sought
To break upon her lonely thought.
But it was now the vesper time,
And she return'd not at the chime
Of holy bells,—she knew the hour:—
At last they search'd her favourite bower;

Beside the fount they found the maid
On head bow'd down, as if she pray'd;
Her long black hair fell like a veil,
Making her pale brow yet more pale.
'Twas strange to look upon her face,
Then turn and see its shadowy trace
Within the fountain; one like stone,
So cold, so colourless, so lone,—
A statue nymph, placed there to show
How far the sculptor's art could go.
The other, and that too the shade,
In light and crimson warmth array'd;
For the red glow of day declining,
Was now upon the fountain shining,
And the shape in its mirror bright
Of sparkling waves caught warmth and light.

ELVIRA spoke not, though so near,
Her words lay mute in their own fear:
At last she whisper'd LEILA's name,—
No answer from the maiden came.
She took one cold hand in her own,
Started, and it dropp'd lifeless down!
She gazed upon the fixed eye,
And read in it mortality.

And lingers yet that maiden's tale
A legend of the lemon vale:
They say that never from that hour
Has flourish'd there a single flower,—
The jasmine droop'd, the violets died,
Nothing grew by that fountain side,
Save the pale pining lemon trees,
And the dark weeping cypresses.—

And now when to the twilight star
The lover wakes his lone guitar,
Or maiden bids a song impart
All that is veil'd in her own heart,
The wild and mournful tale they tell
Of her who loved, alas! too well.—

And where was RAYMOND, where was he?
Borne homeward o'er the rapid sea,
While sunny days and favouring gales
Brought welcome speed to the white sails,—
With bended knee, and upraised hand,
He stood upon his native land,
With all that happiness can be
When resting on futurity.
On, on he went, and o'er the plain
He rode an armed knight again;

He urged his steed with hand and heel,
It bounded concious of the steel,
And never yet to RAYMOND'S eye
Spread such an earth, shone such a sky,
Blew such sweet breezes o'er his brow,
As those his native land had now.

He thought upon young EVA'S name,
And felt that she was still the same;
He thought on AMIRALD, his child
Had surely his dark cares beguiled;
He thought upon the welcome sweet
It would be his so soon to meet:
And never had the star of hope
Shone on a lovelier horoscope.

And evening shades were on the hour
When RAYMOND rode beneath the tower
Remember'd well, for ADELINE
Had there been his heart's summer queen.
Could this be it?—he knew the heath
Which, lake-like, spread its walls beneath,—
He saw the dark old chesnut wood
Which had for ages by it stood;
And but for these the place had been
As one that he had never seen.
The walls were rent, the gates were gone,
No red light from the watch tower shone.
He enter'd, and the hall was bare,
It show'd the spoiler had been there;
Even upon the very hearth
The green grass found a place of birth.

Oh, vanity! that the stone wall
May sooner than a blossom fall;
The tower in its strength may be
Laid low before the willow tree.
There stood the wood, subject to all
The autumn wind, the winter fall,—
There stood the castle which the rain
And wind had buffetted in vain,—
But one in ruins stood beside,
The other green in its spring pride.

And RAYMOND paced the lonely hall
As if he fear'd his own footfall.
It is the very worst, the gloom
Of a deserted banquet-room,
To see the spider's web outvie
The torn and faded tapestry,—

To shudder at the cold damp air,
Then think how once were burning there
The incense vase with odour glowing,
The silver lamp its softness throwing
O'er cheeks as beautiful and bright
As roses bathed in summer light,—
How through the portals sweeping came
Proud cavalier and high-born dame,
With gems like stars 'mid raven curls,
And snow-white plumes and wreathed pearls—
Gold cups, whose lighted flames made dim
The sparkling stones around the brim;—
Soft voices answering to the lute,
The swelling harp, the sigh-waked flute,—
The glancing lightness of the dance,—
Then, starting sudden from thy trance,

Gaze round the lonely place and see
Its silence and obscurity:
Then commune with thine heart, and say
These are the foot-prints of decay,—
And I, even thus shall pass away.

And RAYMOND turn'd him to depart,
With darken'd brow and heavy heart.
Can outrage or can time remove
The sting, the scar of slighted love?
He could not look upon the scene
And not remember ADELINE,
Fair queen of gone festivity,—
Oh, where was it, and where was she!

At distance short a village lay,
And thither RAYMOND took his way,

And in its hostel shelter found,
While the dark night was closing round.
It was a cheerful scene, the hearth
Was bright with wood-fire and with mirth,
And in the midst a harper bent
O'er his companion instrument:
'Twas an old man, his hair was grey,—
For winter tracks in snow its way,—
But yet his dark, keen eye was bright,
With somewhat of its youthful light;
Like one whose path of life had made
Its course through mingled sheen and shade,
But one whose buoyant spirit still
Pass'd lightly on through good or ill,—
One reckless if borne o'er the sea
In storm or in tranquillity;

The same to him, as if content
Were his peculiar element.
'Tis strange how the heart can create
Or colour from itself its fate;
We make ourselves our own distress,
We are ourselves our happiness.

And many a song and many a lay,
Had pass'd the cheerful hour away,
When one pray'd that he would relate,
His tale of the proud ladye's fate,—
The lady ADELINE;—the name
Like lightning upon RAYMOND came!
And swept the harper o'er his chords
As that he paused for minstrel words,
Or stay'd till silence should prevail,
When thus the old man told the tale.

THE PROUD LADYE.

Oh, what could the ladye's beauty match,
An it were not the ladye's pride;
An hundred knights from far and near
Woo'd at that ladye's side.

The rose of the summer slept on her cheek,
Its lily upon her breast,
And her eye shone forth like the glorious star
That rises the first in the west.

There were some that woo'd for her land and gold,
And some for her noble name,
And more that woo'd for her loveliness;
But her answer was still the same.

" There is a steep and lofty wall,
Where my warders trembling stand,
He who at speed shall ride round its height,
For him shall be my hand."

Many turn'd away from the deed,
The hope of their wooing o'er;
But many a young knight mounted the steed
He never mounted more.

At last there came a youthful knight,
From a strange and far countrie,
The steed that he rode was white as the foam
Upon a stormy sea.

And she who had scorn'd the name of love,
Now bow'd before its might,
And the ladye grew meek as if disdain
Were not made for that stranger knight.

She sought at first to steal his soul
By dance, song, and festival;
At length on bended knee she pray'd
He would not ride the wall.

But gaily the young knight laugh'd at her fears,
And flung him on his steed,—
There was not a saint in the calendar
That she pray'd not to in her need.

She dared not raise her eyes to see
If heaven had granted her prayer,
Till she heard a light step bound to her side,—
The gallant knight stood there!

And took the ladye ADELINE
From her hair a jewell'd band,
But the knight repell'd the offer'd gift,
And turn'd from the offer'd hand.

And deemest thou that I dared this deed,
Ladye, for love of thee;
The honour that guides the soldier's lance
Is mistress enough for me.

Enough for me to ride the ring,
The victor's crown to wear;
But not in honour of the eyes
Of any ladye there.

I had a brother whom I lost
Through thy proud crueltie,
And far more was to me his love,
Than woman's love can be.

I came to triumph o'er the pride
Through which that brother fell,
I laugh to scorn thy love and thee,
And now, proud dame, farewell!

And from that hour the ladye pined,
For love was in her heart,
And on her slumber there came dreams
She could not bid depart.

Her eye lost all its starry light,
Her cheek grew wan and pale,
Till she hid her faded loveliness
Beneath the sacred veil.

And she cut off her long dark hair,
And bade the world farewell,
And she now dwells a veiled nun
In Saint Marie's cell.

And what were Raymond's dreams that nig
The morning's gift of crimson light
Waked not his sleep, for his pale cheek
Did not of aught like slumber speak;
Though not upon a morn like this
Should Raymond turn to aught but bliss.
To-day, when Eva will be prest,
Ere evening, to his throbbing breast,—
To-day, when all his own will be
That cheer'd his long captivity.
Care to the wind of heaven was flung
As the young knight to stirrup sprung.

He reach'd the castle; save one, all
Rush'd to his welcome in the hall.
He gazed, but there no Eva came,
Scarce his low voice named Eva's name!

" Our Eva, she is far away
Amid the young, the fair, the gay.
At Thoulouse, now the bright resort
Of beauty and the Minstrel Court;
For this time it is hers to set
The victor's brow with violet.
Her father,—but you're worn and pale,—
Come, the wine cup will aid my tale."
The greeting of the elder knight,
The cheerful board, the vintage bright,
Not all could chase from Raymond's soul,
The cloud that o'er its gladness stole;
And soon, pretending toil, he sought
A solitude for lonely thought.—
'Tis strange how much of vanity
Almost unconciously will be

With our best feelings mix'd, and now
But that, what shadows RAYMOND'S brow.

He had deem'd a declining flower,
Pining in solitary bower,
He should find EVA, sad and lone,—
He sought the cage, the bird had flown,
With burnish'd plume, and careless wing,
A follower of the sunny Spring.
He pictured her the first of all
In masque, and dance, and festival,—
With cheek at its own praises burning,
And eyes but on adorers turning,
The lady of the tournament,
For whose bright sake the lance was sent;
While minstrels borrow'd from her name
The beauty which they paid by fame:

Beloved! not even his hot brain
Dared whisper,—loving too again.

But the next morn, and RAYMOND bent
His steps to that fair Parliament,
While pride and hasty anger strove
Against his memory and his love.
But leave we him awhile to rave
Against the faith which, like the wave,
By every grain of sand can be
Moved from its own tranquillity,
Till settled he that woman's mind
Was but a leaf before the wind,—
Left to remain, retreat, advance,
Without a destiny but chance.—

And where is Eva? on her cheek
Is there aught that of love may speak?
Amid the music and perfume
That, mingling, fill yon stately room
A maiden sits, around her chair
Stand others who, with graceful care,
Bind Indian jewels in her hair.
'Tis Eva! on one side a stand
Of dark wood from the Ethiop's land
Is cover'd with all gems that deck
A maiden's arm, or maiden's neck:
The diamond with its veins of light,
The sapphire like a summer night,
The ruby rich as it had won
A red gift from the setting sun,
And white pearls, such as might have been
A bridal offering for a queen.

On the side opposite were thrown,
Rainbow-like mix'd, a sparkling zone,
A snow-white veil, a purple vest
Embroider'd with a golden crest.
Before, the silver mirror's trace
Is the sweet shadow of her face,
Placed as appealing to her eyes
For the truth of the flatteries,
With which her gay attendants seek
To drive all sadness from her cheek.—
She heard them not; she reck'd not how
They wreath'd the bright hair o'er her brow,
Whate'er its sunny grace might be
There was an eye that would not see.
They told of words of royal praise,
They told of minstrel's moonlight lays,

Of youthful knights who swore to die
For her least smile, her lightest sigh.
But he was gone, her young, her brave,
Her heart was with him in the grave.

Wearied, for ill the heart may bear
Light words in which it has no share,
She turn'd to a pale maid, who, mute,
Dreaming of song leant o'er her lute;
And at her sign, that maiden's words
Came echo-like to its sweet chords,—
It was a low and silver tone,
And very sad, like sorrow's own;
She sang of love as it will be,
And has been in reality,—
Of fond hearts broken and betray'd,
Of roses opening but to fade,

Of wither'd hope, and wasted bloom,
Of the young warrior's early tomb;
And the while her dark mournful eye
Held with her words deep sympathy.

And EVA listen'd;—music's power
Is little felt in sunlit hour;
But hear its voice when hopes depart,
Like swallows, flying from the heart
On which the summer's late decline
Has set a sadness and a sign;
When friends whose commune once we sought
For every bosom wish and thought,
Have given in our hour of need
Such a support as gives the reed,—
When we have seen the green grass grow
Over what once was life below;

How deeply will the spirit feel
The lute, the song's sweet-voiced appeal;
And how the heart drink in their sighs
As echoes they from Paradise.

'Tis done: the last bright gem is set
In EVA's sparkling coronet;
A soil on her rich veil appears,—
Unsuiting here—and is it tears!

Her father met her, he was proud
To lead his daughter through the crowd,
And see the many eyes that gazed,
Then mark the blush their gazing raised;
And for his sake, she forced away
The clouds that on her forehead lay,

The sob rose in her throat, 'twas all,
The tears swam, but they dared not fall;
And the pale lip put on a smile,
Alas it was too sad for guile!

A beautiful and festal day
Shone summer bright o'er the array,
And purple banners work'd in gold,
And azure pennons spread their fold,
O'er the rich awnings which were round
The galleries that hemm'd in the ground,
The green and open space, where met
The Minstrels of the Violet;
And two or three old stately trees
Soften'd the sun, skreen'd from the breeze.
And there came many a lovely dame,
With cheek of rose, and eye of flame;

And many a radiant arm was raised,
Whose rubies in the sunshine blazed;
And many a white veil swept the air
Only than what they hid less fair;
And placed at his own beauty's feet
Found many a youthful knight his seat,
And flung his jewell'd cap aside,
And wore his scarf with gayer pride,
And whisper'd soft and gallant things,
And bade the bards' imaginings
Whenever love awoke the tone,
With their sweet passion plead his own.

Beneath an azure canopy,
Blue as the sweep of April's sky,
Upon a snowy couch reclined
Like a white cloud before the wind,

Leant Eva:—there was many a tent
More royal, more magnificent,
With purple, gold, and crimson swelling,
But none so like a fairy dwelling:
One curtain bore her father's crest,
But summer flowers confined the rest;
And, at her feet, the ground was strew'd
With the June's rainbow multitude:
Beside her knelt a page, who bore
A vase with jewels sparkling o'er,
And in that shining vase was set
The prize,—THE GOLDEN VIOLET.

Alas for her whom ev'ry eye
Worshipp'd like a divinity!
Alas for her whose ear was fill'd
With flatteries like sweet woods distill'd!

Alas for EVA! bloom and beam,
Music and mirth, came like a dream,
In which she mingled not,—apart
From all in heaviness of heart.
There were soft tales pour'd in her ear,
She look'd on many a cavalier,
Wander'd her eye round the glad scene,
It was as if they had not been;—
To ear, eye, heart, there only came
Her RAYMOND'S image, RAYMOND'S name!

There is a flower, a snow-white flower,
Fragile as if a morning shower
Would end its being, and the earth
Forget to what it gave a birth;
And it looks innocent and pale,
Slight as the least force could avail

To pluck it from its bed, and yet
Its root in depth and strength is set.
The July sun, the autumn rain,
Beat on its slender stalk in vain;—
Around it spreads, despite of care,
Till the whole garden is its share;
And other plants must fade and fall
Beneath its deep and deadly thrall.
This is love's emblem; it is nurst
In all unconciousness at first,
Too slight, too fair, to wake distrust;
No sign how that an after hour
Will rue and weep its fatal power.
'Twas thus with EVA; she had dream'd
Of love as his first likeness seem'd,
A sweet thought o'er which she might brood,
The treasure of her solitude;

But tidings of young RAYMOND's fate
Waken'd her from her dream too late,
Even her timid love could be
The ruling star of destiny.
And when a calmer mood prevail'd
O'er that whose joy her father hail'd,
Too well he saw how day by day
Some other emblem of decay
Came on her lip, and o'er her brow,
Which only she would disallow;
The cheek the lightest word could flush
Not with health's rose, but the heart's gush
Of feverish anxiousness; he caught
At the least hope, and vainly sought
By change, by pleasure, to dispell
Her sorrow from its secret cell.

In vain;—what can reanimate
A heart too early desolate?
It had been his, it could not save,
But it could follow to his grave.

The trumpets peal'd their latest round,
Stole from the flutes a softer sound,
Swell'd the harp to each master's hand,
As onward came the minstrel band!
And many a bright cheek grew more bright,
And many a dark eye flash'd with light,
As bent the minstrel o'er his lute,
And urged the lover's plaining suit,
Or swept a louder chord, and gave
Some glorious history of the brave.

At last from 'mid the crowd one came,
Unknown himself, unknown his name,
Both knight and bard,—the stranger wore
The garb of a young Troubadour;
His dark green mantle loosely flung,
Conceal'd the form o'er which it hung;
And his cap, with its shadowy plume,
Hid his face by its raven gloom.
Little did EVA's careless eye
Dream that it wander'd RAYMOND by,
Though his first tone thrill'd every vein,
It only made her turn again,
Forget the scene, the song, and dwell
But on what memory felt too well.

THE SONG OF THE TROUBADOUR.

In some valley low and lone,
Where I was the only one
Of the human dwellers there,
Would I dream away my care:
I'd forget how in the world
Snakes lay amid roses curl'd,
I'd forget my once distress
For young Love's insidiousness.
False foes, and yet falser friends,
Seeming but for their own ends;
Pleasures known but by their wings,
Yet remember'd by their stings;
Gold's decrease, and health's decay,
I will fly like these away,

To some lovely solitude,
Where the nightingale's young brood
Lives amid the shrine of leaves,
Which the wild rose round them weaves,
And my dwelling shall be made
Underneath the beech-tree's shade.
Twining ivy for the walls
Over which the jasmine falls,
Like a tapestry work'd with gold
And pearls around each emerald fold:
And my couches shall be set
With the purple violet,
And the white ones too, inside
Each a blush to suit a bride.
That flower which of all that live,
Lovers, should be those who give,

Primroses, for each appears
Pale and wet with many tears.
Alas tears and pallid cheek
All too often love bespeak!
There the gilderose should fling
Silver treasures to the spring,
And the bright laburnum's tresess
Seeking the young wind's caresses;
In the midst an azure lake,
Where no oar e'er dips to break
The clear bed of its blue rest,
Where the halcyon builds her nest;
And amid the sedges green,
And the water-flag's thick screen,
The solitary swan resides;
And the bright kingfisher hides,

With its colours rich like those
Which the bird of India shows.—
Once I thought that I would seek
Some fair creature, young and meek,
Whose most gentle smile would bless
My too utter loneliness;
But I then remember'd all
I had suffer'd from Love's thrall,
And I thought I 'd not again
Enter in the lion's den;
But, with my wrung heart now free,
So I thought I still will be.
Love is like a kingly dome,
Yet too often sorrow's home;
Sometimes smiles, but oftener tears,
Jealousies, and hopes, and fears,

A sweet liquor sparkling up,
But drank from a poison'd cup.
Would you guard your heart from care
Love must never enter there.
I will dwell with summer flowers,
Fit friends for the summer hours,
My companions honey-bees,
And birds, and buds, and leaves, and trees,
And the dew of the twilight,
And the thousand stars of night:
I will cherish that sweet gift,
The least earthly one now left
Of the gems of Paradise,
Poesy's delicious sighs.
Ill may that soft spirit bear
Crowds' or cities' healthless air:

Was not her sweet breathing meant
To echo the low murmur sent
By the flowers, and by the rill,
When all save the wind is still?
As if to tell of those fair things
High thoughts, pure imaginings,
That recall how bright, how fair,
In our other state we were.
And at last, when I have spent
A calm life in mild content,
May my spirit pass away
As the early leaves decay:
Spring shakes her gay coronal,
One sweet breath, and then they fall.
Only let the red-breast bring
Moss to strew me with, and sing

One low mournful dirge to tell
I have bid the world farewell.

And praise rang forth, the prize is won,
Young minstrel, thou hast equal none!
They led him to the lady's seat,
And knelt he down at Eva's feet;
She bent his victor brow to deck,
And, fainting, sunk upon his neck!
The cap and plume aside were thrown,
'Twas as the grave restored its own,
And sent its victim forth to share
Light, life, and hope, and sun, and air.

That day the feast spread gay and bright
In honour of the youthful knight,

And it was Eva's fairy hand
Met Raymond's in the saraband,
And it was Eva's ear that heard
Many a low and love-tuned word.—
And life seem'd as a sunny stream,
And hope awaked as from a dream;
But what has minstrel left to tell
When love has not an obstacle?
My lute is hush'd, and mute its chords,
The heart and happiness have no words!

My tale is told, the glad sunshine
Fell over its commencing line,—
It was a morn in June, the sun
Was blessing all it shone upon,
The sky was clear as not a cloud
Were ever on its face allow'd;

The hill whereon I stood was made
A pleasant place of summer shade
By the green elms which seem'd as meant
To make the noon a shadowy tent.
I had been bent half sleep, half wake,
Dreaming those rainbow dreams that take
The spirit prisoner in their chain,
Too beautiful to be quite vain,—
Enough if they can soothe or cheer
One moment's pain or sorrow here.
And I was happy; hope and fame
Together on my visions came,
For memory had just dipp'd her wings
In honey dews, and sunlit springs,—
My brow burnt with its early wreath,
My soul had drank its first sweet breath

Of praise, and yet my cheek was flushing,
My heart with the full torrent gushing
Of feelings whose delighted mood
Was mingling joy and gratitude.
Scarce possible it seem'd to be
That such praise could be meant for me.—
Enured to coldness and neglect,
My spirit chill'd, my breathing check'd,
All that can crowd and crush the mind,
Friends even more than fate unkind,
And fortunes stamp'd with the pale sign
That marks and makes autumn's decline.
How could I stand in the sunshine,
And marvel not that it was mine?
One word, if ever happiness
In its most passionate excess

Offer'd its wine to human lip,
It has been mine that cup to sip.
I may not say with what deep dread
The words of my first song were said,
I may not say how much delight
Has been upon my minstrel flight.—
'Tis vain, and yet my heart would say
Somewhat to those who made my way
A path of light, with power to kill,
To check, to crush, but not the will.
Thanks for the gentleness that lent
My young lute such encouragement,
When scorn had turn'd my heart to stone,
Oh, their's be thanks and benison!

Back to the summer hill again,
When first I thought upon this strain,

And music rose upon the air,
I look'd below, and, gather'd there,
Rode soldiers with their breast-plates glancing,
Helmets and snow-white feathers dancing,
And trumpets at whose martial sound
Prouder the war horse trod the ground,
And waved their flag with many a name
Of battles and each battle fame.
And as I mark'd the gallant line
Pass through the green lane's serpentine,
And as I saw the boughs give way
Before the crimson pennons' play;
To other days my fancy went,
Call'd up the stirring tournament,
The dark-eyed maiden who for years
Kept the vows seal'd by parting tears,

While he who own'd her plighted hand
Was fighting in the Holy Land.
The youthful knight with his gay crest,
His ladye's scarf upon a breast
Whose truth was kept, come life, come death,—
Alas! has modern love such faith?
I thought how in the moon-lit hour
The minstrel hymn'd his maiden's bower,
His helm and sword changed for the lute
And one sweet song to urge his suit.
Floated around me moated hall,
And donjon keep, and frowning wall;
I saw the marshall'd hosts advance,
I gazed on banner, brand, and lance;
The murmur of a low song came
Bearing one only worshipp'd name;

And my next song, I said, should be
A tale of gone-by chivalry.

My task is done, the tale is told,
The lute drops from my wearied hold;
Spreads no green earth, no summer sky
To raise fresh visions for my eye,
The hour is dark, the winter rain
Beats cold and harsh against the pane,
Where, spendthrift like, the branches twine,
Worn, knotted, of a leafless vine;
And the wind howls in gusts around,
As omens were in each drear sound,—
Omens that bear upon their breath
Tidings of sorrow, pain, and death.
Thus should it be,—I could not bear
The breath of flowers, the sunny air

Upon that ending page should be
Which ONE will never, never see.
Yet who will love it like that one,
Who cherish as he would have done,
My father! albeit but in vain
This clasping of a broken chain,
And albeit of all vainest things
That haunt with sad imaginings,
None has the sting of memory;
Yet still my spirit turns to thee,
Despite of long and lone regret,
Rejoicing it cannot forget.
I would not lose the lightest thought
With one remembrance of thine fraught,—
And my heart said no name, but thine
Should be on this last page of mine.

My father, though no more, thine ear
Censure or praise of mine can hear,
It soothes me to embalm thy name
With all my hope, my pride, my fame,
Treasures of Fancy's fairy hall,—
Thy name most precious far of all.

My page is wet with bitter tears,—
I cannot but think of those years
When happiness and I would wait
On summer evenings by the gate,
And keep o'er the green fields our watch
The first sound of thy step to catch,
Then run for the first kiss, and word,—
An unkind one I never heard.
But these are pleasant memories,
And later years have none like these:

They came with griefs, and pains, and cares,
All that the heart breaks while it bears;
Desolate as I feel alone
I should not weep that thou art gone.
Alas! the tears that still will fall
Are selfish in their fond recall;—
If ever tears could win from Heaven
A loved one, and yet be forgiven,
Mine surely might; I may not tell
The agony of my farewell!
A single tear I had not shed,—
'Twas the first time I mourn'd the dead:—
It was my heaviest loss, my worst,—
My father!—and was thine the first!

Farewell! in my heart is a spot
Where other griefs and cares come not,

Hallow'd by love, by me
And deeply honour'd, de
My own dead father, tin
Chance, change, upon hi
But never will thy name
The household god of th
Until thy orphan girl ma
The grave where her bes
Never, dear father, love
Like the dear love I had

POETICAL SKETCHES

OF

MODERN PICTURES.

Hallow'd by love, by memory kept,
And deeply honour'd, deeply wept.
My own dead father, time may bring
Chance, change, upon his rainbow-wing,
But never will thy name depart
The household god of thy child's heart,
Until thy orphan girl may share
The grave where her best feelings are.
Never, dear father, love can be,
Like the dear love I had for thee!

POETICAL SKETCHES

OF

MODERN PICTURES.

Beautiful art! my worship is for thee,---
The heart's entire devotion. When I look
Upon thy radiant wonders, every pulse
Is thrill'd as in the presence of divinity!
Pictures, bright pictures, oh! they are to me
A world for mind to revel in. I love
To give a history to every face, to think,---
As I thought with the painter,---as I knew
What his high communing had been.------L. E. L.

POETICAL CATALOGUE OF PICTURES,
IN LIT. GAZ. 1823.

PORTRAIT OF A LADY.

BY SIR THOMAS LAWRENCE.

Lady, thy lofty brow is fair,
Beauty's sign and seal are there;
And thy lip is like the rose
Closing round the bee's repose;
And thine eye is like a star,
But blue as the sapphires' are.
Beautiful patrician! thou
Wearest on thy stately brow

All that suits a noble race,
All of high-born maiden's grace,—
Who is there could look on thee
And doubt thy nobility?

Round thee satin robe is flung,
Pearls upon thy neck are hung,
And upon thy arm of snow
Rubies like red sun-gifts glow;
Yet thou wearest pearl and gem
As thou hadst forgotten them.—
'Tis a step, but made to tread
O'er Persian web, or flower's head,—
Soft hand that might only move
In the broider'd silken glove,—
Cheek unused to ruder air
Than what hot-house rose might bear,—

One whom nature only meant
To be queen of the tournament,—
Courtly fete, and lighted hall,—
Grace and ornament of all!

JULIET AFTER THE MASQUERADE.

BY THOMPSON.

She left the festival, for it seem'd dim
Now that her eye no longer dwelt on him,
And sought her chamber,—gazed, (then turn'd away),
Upon a mirror that before her lay,
Half fearing, half believing her sweet face
Would surely claim within his memory place.
The hour was late, and that night her light foot
Had been the constant echo of the lute;

Yet sought she not her pillow, the cool air
Came from the casement, and it lured her there.
The terrace was beneath, and the pale moon
Shone o'er the couch which she had press'd at noon,
Soft-lingering o'er some minstrel's love-lorn page,—
Alas, tears are the poet's heritage!

She flung her on that couch, but not for sleep;
No, it was only that the wind might steep
Her fever'd lip in its delicious dew:
Her brow was burning, and aside she threw
Her cap and plume, and, loosen'd from its fold,
Came o'er her neck and face a shower of gold,
A thousand curls. It was a solitude
Made for young hearts in love's first dreaming mood:—
Beneath the garden lay, fill'd with rose-trees
Whose sighings came like passion on the breeze.

Two graceful statues of the Parian stone
So finely shaped, that as the moonlight shone
The breath of life seem'd to their beauty given,
But less the life of earth than that of heaven.
'Twas PSYCHE and her boy-god, so divine
They turn'd the terrace to an idol shrine,
With its white vases and their summer share
Of flowers, like altars raised to that sweet pair.

And there the maiden leant, still in her ear
The whisper dwelt of that young cavalier;
It was no fancy, he had named the name
Of love, and at that thought her cheek grew flame:
It was the first time her young ear had heard
A lover's burning sigh, or silver word;
Her thoughts were all confusion, but most sweet,—
Her heart beat high, but pleasant was its beat.

She murmur'd over many a snatch of song
That might to her own feelings now belong;
She thought upon old histories she had read,
And placed herself in each high heroine's stead,
Then woke her lute,—oh! there is little known
Of music's power till aided by love's own.
And this is happiness: oh! love will last
When all that made it happiness is past,—
When all its hopes are as the glittering toys
Time present offers, time to come destroys,—
When they have been too often crush'd to earth,
For further blindness to their little worth,—
When fond illusions have dropt one by one,
Like pearls from a rich carkanet, till none
Are left upon life's soil'd and naked string,—
And this is all what time will ever bring.

—And that fair girl,—what can the heart foresee
Of her young love, and of its destiny?
There is a white cloud o'er the moon, its form
Is very light, and yet there sleeps the storm;
It is an omen, it may tell the fate
Of love known all too soon, repented all too late.

THE COMBAT.

BY ETTY.

THEY fled,—for there was for the brave
Left only a dishonour'd grave.
The day was lost; and his red hand
Was now upon a broken brand,
The foes were in his native town,
The gates were forced, the walls were down,
The burning city lit the sky,—
What had he then to do but fly;

Fly to the mountain-rock, where yet
Revenge might strike, or peace forget!

They fled,—for she was by his side,
Life's last and loveliest link, his bride,—
Friends, fame, hope, freedom, all were gone,
Or linger'd only with that one.
They hasten'd by the lonely way
That through the winding forest lay,
Hearth, home, tower, temple, blazed behind,
And shout and shriek came on the wind;
And twice the warrior turn'd again
And cursed the arm that now in vain,
Wounded and faint, essay'd to grasp
The sword that trembled in its clasp.

At last they reach'd a secret shade
Which seem'd as for their safety made;
And there they paused, for the warm tide
Burst in red gushes from his side,
And hung the drops on brow and cheek,
And his gasp'd breath came thick and weak.
She took her long dark hair, and bound
The cool moss on each gaping wound,
And in her closed-up hands she brought
The water which his hot lip sought,—
And anxious gazed upon his eye,
As asking, shall we live or die?
Almost as if she thought his breath
Had power o'er his own life and death.

But, hark!—'tis not the wind deceives,
There is a step among the leaves:

Her blood runs cold, her heart beats high,
It is their fiercest enemy;
He of the charm'd and deadly steel,
Whose stroke was never known to heal,—
He of the sword sworn not to spare,—
She flung her down in her despair!

The dying chief sprang to his knee,
And the staunch'd wounds well'd fearfully;
But his gash'd arm, what is it now?
Livid his lip, and black his brow,
While over him the slayer stood,
As if he almost scorn'd the blood
That cost so little to be won,—
He strikes,—the work of death is done!

THE FAIRY QUEEN SLEEPING.

BY STOTHARD.

She lay upon a bank, the favourite haunt
Of the spring wind in its first sunshine hour,
For the luxuriant strawberry blossoms spread
Like a snow-shower there, and violets
Bow'd down their purple vases of perfume
About her pillow,—link'd in a gay band
Floated fantastic shapes, these were her guards,
Her lithe and rainbow elves.

We have been o'er land and sea,
Seeking lovely dreams for thee,—
Where is there we have not been
Gathering gifts for our sweet queen?
We are come with sound and sight
Fit for fairy's sleep to-night,—

First around thy couch shall sweep
Odours, such as roses weep
When the earliest spring rain
Calls them into life again;
Next upon thine ear shall float
Many a low and silver note,
Stolen from a dark-eyed maid
When her lover's serenade,
Rising as the stars grew dim,
Waken'd her from thoughts of him.
There shall steal o'er lip and cheek
Gales, but all too light to break
Thy soft rest,—such gales as hide
All day orange-flowers inside,
Or that, while hot noontide, dwell
In the purple hyacinth bell;

And before thy sleeping eyes
Shall come glorious pageantries,—
Palaces of gems and gold,
Such as dazzle to behold,—
Gardens, in which every tree
Seems a world of bloom to be,—
Fountains, whose clear waters show
The white pearls that lie below.—
During slumber's magic reign
Other times shall live again;
First thou shalt be young and free
In thy days of liberty,—
Then again be woo'd and won
By thy stately OBERON.
Or thou shalt descend to earth,
And see all of mortal birth.

No, that world's too full of care
For e'en dreams to linger there.
But, behold, the sun is set,
And the diamond coronet
Of the young moon is on high
Waiting for our revelry;
And the dew is on the flower,
And the stars proclaim our hour;
Long enough thy rest has been,
Wake, TITANIA, wake our queen!

THE ORIENTAL NOSEGAY.

BY PICKERSGILL.

THROUGH the light curtains came the perfumed air,
And flung them back and show'd a garden, where
The eye could just catch glimpses of those trees
Which send sweet messages upon the breeze
To lull a maiden's sleep, and fan her cheek,
When inward thoughts in outward blushes speak.
Beneath 's a silken couch, just fit to be
A snowy shrine for some fair deity;

And there a beauty rests, lovely as those
Enchanted visions haunting the repose
Of the young poet, when his eyelids shut
To dream that love they have but dream'd as yet;—
But dream'd! Alas, that love should ever be
A happiness but made for phantasie!
And flowers are by her side, and her dark eye
Seems as it read in them her destiny.
She knew whose hand had gather'd them, she knew
Whose sigh and touch were on their scent and hue.

Beautiful language! Love's peculiar, own,
But only to the spring and summer known.
Ah! little marvel in such clime and age
As that of our too earth-bound pilgrimage,
That we should daily hear that love is fled,
And hope grown pale, and lighted feelings dead.

Not for the cold, the careless to impart,
By such sweet signs, the silence of the heart:
But surely in the countries where the sun
Lights loveliness in all he shines upon,—
Where love is as a mystery and a dream,
One single flower upon life's troubled stream;
There, there, perchance, may the young bosom thrill,
Feeling and fancy linger with love still.

She look'd upon the blossoms, and a smile,
A twilight one, lit up her lip the while.
Surely her love is blest, no leaves are there
That aught of lover's misery declare.
True, 'mid them is that pale and pining flower,
Whose dim blue colour speaks an absent hour;
Yet it is nothing but that tender sorrow
Of those who part to-day to meet to-morrow:

For there are hope and constancy beside,
And are not these to happiness allied;
And yet upon that maiden's cheek is caught
A summer evening's shade of pensive thought,
As if these large soft eyes knew all their fate,
How the heart would its destiny create,—
At once too tender, and too passionate;—
Too made for happiness to be happy here,
An angel fetter'd to an earthly sphere.—
And those dark eyes, so large, so soft, so bright,
So clear as if their very tears were light;
They tell that destiny, art thou not one
To whom love will be like the summer sun
That feeds the diamond in the secret mine,
Then calls it from its solitude to shine,
And piece by piece be broken. Watch the bloom,
And mark its fading to an early tomb,

ead in the decay upon it stealing
own wasted hope and wither'd feeling,—
ting messengers for love! as fair,
ickly past as his own visions are;—
ing, fling the flowers away!

A CHILD SCREENING A DOVE FROM A HAWK.

BY STEWARDSON.

Ay, screen thy favourite dove, fair child,
Ay, screen it if you may,—
Yet I misdoubt thy trembling hand
Will scare the hawk away.

That dove will die, that child will weep,—
Is this their destinie?
Ever amid the sweets of life
Some evil thing must be.

Ay, moralize,—is it not thus
We 've mourn'd our hope and love?
Alas! there 's tears for every eye,
A hawk for every dove!

THE ENCHANTED ISLAND.

BY DANBY.

And there the island lay, the waves around
Had never known a storm; for the north wind
Was charm'd from coming, and the only airs
That blew brought sunshine on their azure wings,
Or tones of music from the sparry caves,
Where the sea-maids make lutes of the pink conch.
These were sea breezes,—those that swept the land
Brought other gifts,—sighs from blue violets,
Or from June's sweet Sultana, the bright rose,

Stole odours. On the silver mirror's face
Was but a single ripple that was made
By a flamingo's beak, whose scarlet wings
Shone like a meteor on the stream: around,
Upon the golden sands, were coral plants,
And shells of many colours, and sea weeds,
Whose foliage caught and chain'd the Nautilus,
Where lay they as at anchor. On each side
Were grottoes, like fair porticoes with steps
Of the green marble; and a lovely light,
Like the far radiance of a thousand lamps,
Half-shine, half-shadow, or the glorious track
Of a departing star but faintly seen
In the dim distance, through those caverns shone,
And play'd o'er the tall trees which seem'd to hide
Gardens, where hyacinths rang their soft bells
To call the bees from the anemone,

Jealous of their bright rivals' golden wealth.
—Amid those arches floated starry shapes,
Just indistinct enough to make the eye
Dream of surpassing beauty; but in front,
Borne on a car of pearl, and drawn by swans,
There lay a lovely figure,—she was queen
Of the Enchanted Island, which was raised
From ocean's bosom but to pleasure her:
And spirits, from the stars, and from the sea,
The beautiful mortal had them for her slaves.

She was the daughter of a king, and loved
By a young Ocean Spirit from her birth,—
He hover'd o'er her in her infancy,
And bade the rose grow near her, that her cheek
Might catch its colour,—lighted up her dreams
With fairy wonders, and made harmony

The element in which she moved; at last,
When that she turn'd away from earthly love,
Enamour'd of her visions, he became
Visible with his radiant wings, and bore
His bride to the fair island.

CUPID AND SWALLOWS FLYING FROM WINTER.

BY DAGLEY.

"We fly from the cold."

AWAY, away, o'er land and sea,
This is now no home for me;
My light wings may never bear
Northern cloud or winter air.
Murky shades are gathering fast,
Sleet and snow are on the blast,

Trees from which the leaves are fled,
Flowers whose very roots are dead,
Grass of its green blade bereft,
These are all that now are left.
—Linger here another day,
I shall be as sad as they;
My companions fly with spring,
I too must be on the wing.

Where are the sweet gales whose song
Wont to waft my darts along?
Scented airs! oh, not like these,
Rough as they which sweep the seas;
But those sighs of rose which bring
Incense from their wandering.
Where are the bright flowers that kept
Guard around me while I slept?

Where the sunny eyes whose beams
Waken'd me from my soft dreams?—
These are with the swallows gone,—
Beauty's heart is chill'd to stone.

Oh! for some sweet southern clime,
Where 'tis ever summer time,—
Where, if blossoms fall, their tomb
Is amid new birth of bloom,—
Where green leaves are ever springing,
Where the lark is always singing,—
One of those bright isles which lie
Fair beneath an azure sky,
Isles of cinnamon and spice,
Shadow each of Paradise,—
Where the flowers shine with dyes,
Tinted bright from the sun-rise,—

Where the birds which drink their dew,
Wave wings of yet brighter hue,
And each river's course is roll'd
Over bed of pearl and gold!

Oh! for those lime-scented groves
Where the Spanish lover roves,
Tuning to the western star,
His soft song and light guitar,—
Where the dark hair'd girls are dancing,
Fairies in the moonlight glancing,
With pencill'd brows, and radiant eyes,
Like their planet-lighted skies!
Or those clear Italian lakes
Where the silver cygnet makes
Its soft nest of leaf and flower,
A white lily for its bower!

Each of these a home would be,
Fit for beauty and for me:
I must seek their happier sphere
While the Winter lords it here.

LOVE NURSED BY SOLITUDE.

BY W. I. THOMSON, EDINBURGH.

Ay, surely it is here that Love should come,
And find, (if he may find on earth), a home;
Here cast off all the sorrow and the shame
That cling like shadows to his very name.

Young Love, thou art belied: they speak of thee,
And couple with thy mention misery;
Talk of the broken heart, the wasted bloom,
The spirit blighted, and the early tomb;

As if these waited on thy golden lot,—
They blame thee for the faults which thou hast not.
Art thou to blame for that they bring on thee
The soil and weight of their mortality?
How can they hope that ever links will hold
Form'd, as they form them now, of the harsh gold?
Or worse than even this, how can they think
That vanity will bind the failing link?
How can they dream that thy sweet life will bear
Crowds', palaces', and cities' heartless air?
Where the lip smiles while the heart's desolate,
And courtesy lends its deep mask to hate;
Where looks and thoughts alike must feel the chain,
And nought of life is real but its pain;
Where the young spirit's high imaginings
Are scorn'd and cast away as idle things;

Where, think or feel, you are foredoom'd to be
A marvel and a sign for mockery;
Where none must wander from the beaten road,—
All alike champ the bit, and feel the goad.
It is not made for thee, young Love! away
To where the green earth laughs to the clear day,
To the deep valley, where a thousand trees
Keep a green court for fairy revelries,—
To some small island on a lonely lake,
Where only swans the diamond waters break,
Where the pines hang in silence oe'r the tide
And the stream gushes from the mountain side;
These, Love, are haunts for thee; where canst thou brood
With thy sweet wings furl'd but in Solitude.

FAIRIES ON THE SEA SHORE.

BY HOWARD.

FIRST FAIRY.

My home and haunt are in every leaf,
Whose life is a summer day, bright and brief,—
I live in the depths of the tulip's bower,
I wear a wreath of the cistus flower,
I drink the dew of the blue harebell,
I know the breath of the violet well,—
The white and the azure violet;
But I know not which is the sweetest yet,—

I have kiss'd the cheek of the rose,
I have watch'd the lily unclose,
My silver mine is the almond tree,
Who will come dwell with flower and me?

CHORUS OF FAIRIES.

Dance we our round, 'tis a summer night,
And our steps are led by the glow-worms' light.

SECOND FAIRY.

My dwelling is in the serpentine
Of the rainbow's colour'd line,—
See how its rose and amber clings
To the many hues of my radiant wings;
Mine is the step that bids the earth
Give to the iris flower its birth,

And mine the golden cup to hide,
Where the last faint hue of the rainbow died.
Search the depths of an Indian mine,
Where are the colours to match with mine?

CHORUS.

Dance we round, for the gale is bringing
Songs the summer rose is singing.

THIRD FAIRY.

I float on the breath of a minstrel's lute,
Or the wandering sounds of a distant flute,
Linger I over the tones that swell
From the pink-vein'd chords of an ocean-shell;
I love the sky-lark's morning hymn,
Or the nightingale heard at the twilight dim,

The echo, the fountain's melody,—
These, oh! these are the spells for me!

CHORUS.

Hail to the summer night of June;
See! yonder has risen our ladye moon.

FOURTH SPIRIT.

My palace is in the coral cave
Set with spars by the ocean wave;
Would ye have gems, then seek them there,—
There found I the pearls that bind my hair.
I and the wind together can roam
Over the green waves and their white foam,—
See, I have got this silver shell,
Mark how my breath will its smallness swell,

For the Nautilus is my boat
In which I over the waters float,—
The moon is shining over the sea,
Who is there will come sail with me?

CHORUS OF FAIRIES.

Our noontide sleep is on leaf and flower,
Our revels are held in a moonlit hour,—
What is there sweet, what is there fair,
And we are not the dwellers there?
Dance we round, for the morning light,
Will put us and our glow-worm lamps to flight!

A GIRL AT HER DEVOTIONS.

BY NEWTON.

She was just risen from her bended knee,
But yet peace seem'd not with her piety;
For there was paleness upon her young cheek,
And thoughts upon the lips which never speak,
But wring the heart that at the last they break.
Alas! how much of misery may be read
In that wan forehead, and that bow'd down head:—
Her eye is on a picture, woe that ever
Love should thus struggle with a vain endeavour

Against itself: it is a common tale,
And ever will be while earth soils prevail
Over earth's happiness; it tells she strove
With silent, secret, unrequited love.

It matters not its history; love has wings
Like lightining, swift and fatal, and it springs
Like a wild flower where it is least expected,
Existing whether cherish'd or rejected;
Living with only but to be content,
Hopeless, for love is its own element,—
Requiring nothing so that it may be
The martyr of its fond fidelity.
A mystery art thou, thou mighty one!
We speak thy name in beauty, yet we shun
To own thee, Love, a guest; the poet's songs
Are sweetest when their voice to thee belongs,

And hope, sweet opiate, tenderness, delight,
Are terms which are thy own peculiar right;
Yet all deny their master,—who will own
His breast thy footstool, and his heart thy throne?

'Tis strange to think if we could fling aside
The masque and mantle that love wears from pride,
How much would be, we now so little guess,
Deep in each heart's undream'd, unsought recess.
The careless smile, like a gay banner borne,
The laugh of merriment, the lip of scorn,—
And for a cloak what is there that can be
So difficult to pierce as gaiety?
Too dazzling to be scann'd, the haughty brow
Seems to hide something it would not avow;
But rainbow words, light laugh, and thoughtless jest,
These are the bars, the curtain to the breast,

That shuns a scrutiny: and she, whose form
Now bends in grief beneath the bosom's storm,
Has hidden well her wound,—now none are nigh
To mock with curious or with careless eye,
(For love seeks sympathy, a chilling yes,
Strikes at the root of its best happiness,
And mockery is worm-wood), she may dwell
On feelings which that picture may not tell.

NYMPH AND ZEPHYR:

A STATUARY GROUP, BY WESTMACOTT.

And the summer sun shone in the sky,
And the rose's whole life was in its sigh,
When her eyelids were kiss'd by a morning beam,
And the Nymph rose up from her moonlit dream;
For she had watch'd the midnight hour
Till her head had bow'd like a sleeping flower;
But now she had waken'd, and light and dew
Gave her morning freshness and morning hue,—
Up she sprang, and away she fled
O'er the lithe grass stem and the blossom's head,

From the lillies' bells she dash'd not the spray,
For her feet were as light and as white as they.
Sudden upon her arm there shone
A gem with the hues of an Indian stone,
And she knew the insect bird whose wing
Is sacred to PSYCHE and to spring;
But scarce had her touch its captive prest
Ere another prisoner was on her breast,
And the Zephyr sought his prize again,—
"No," said the Nymph, thy search is vain:
And her golden hair from its braided yoke
Burst like the banner of hope as she spoke,
"And instead, fair boy, thou shalt moralize
Over the pleasure that from thee flies;
Then it is pleasure,—for we possess
But in the search, not in the success."

SKETCHES FROM HISTORY.

THE SULTANA'S REMONSTRANCE.

It suits thee well to weep,
As thou lookest on the fair land,
Whose sceptre thou hast held
With less than woman's hand.

On yon bright city gaze,
With its white and marble halls,
The glory of its lofty towers,
The strength of its proud walls.

And look to yonder palace,
With its garden of the rose,
With its groves and silver fountains,
Fit for a king's repose.

There is weeping in that city,
And a cry of woe and shame,
There 's a whisper of dishonour,
And that whisper is thy name.

And the stranger's feast is spread,
But it is no feast of thine;
In thine own halls accursed lips
Drain the forbidden wine.

And aged men are in the streets,
Who mourn their length of days,
And young knights stand with folded arms,
And eyes they dare not raise.

There is not one whose blood was not
As the waves of ocean free,—
Their fathers died for thy fathers,
They would have died for thee.

Weep not, 'tis mine to weep,
That ever thou wert born,
Alas, that all a mother's love
Is lost in a queen's scorn!

Yet weep, thou less than woman, weep,
Those tears become thine eye,—
It suits thee well to weep the land
For which thou daredst not die*.

* These lines allude to the flight of the last king of Grenada.

HANNIBAL'S OATH.

And the night was dark and calm,
  There was not a breath of air,
The leaves of the grove were still,
  As the presence of death were there;

Only a moaning sound
  Came from the distant sea,
It was as if, like life,
  It had no tranquillity.

A warrior and a child
  Pass'd through the sacred wood,
Which, like a mystery,
  Around the temple stood.

The warrior's brow was worn
  With the weight of casque and plume,
And sun-burnt was his cheek,
  And his eye and brow were gloom.

The child was young and fair,
  But the forehead large and high,
And the dark eyes' flashing light
  Seem'd to feel their destiny.

They enter'd in the temple,
And stood before the shrine,
It stream'd with the victim's blood,
With incense and with wine.

The ground rock'd beneath their feet,
The thunder shook the dome,
But the boy stood firm, and swore
Eternal hate to Rome.

There's a page in history
O'er which tears of blood were wept,
And that page is the record
How that oath of hate was kept.

ALEXANDER AND PHILLIP.

He stood by the river's side
A conqueror and a king,
None match'd his step of pride
Amid the armed ring.
And a heavy echo rose from the ground,
As a thousand warriors gather'd round.

And the morning march had been long,
And the noontide sun was high,

And weariness bow'd down the strong,
And heat closed every eye;
And the victor stood by the river's brim
Whose coolness seem'd but made for him.

The cypress spread their gloom
Like a cloak from the noontide beam,
He flung back his dusty plume,
And plunged in the silver stream;
He plunged like the young steed, fierce and wild,
He was borne away like the feeble child.

They took the king to his tent
From the river's fatal banks,
A cry of terror went
Like a storm through the Grecian ranks:

Was this the fruit of their glories won,
Was this the death for Ammon's son?

Many a leech heard the call,
But each one shrank away;
For heavy upon all
Was the weight of fear that day:
When a thought of treason, a word of death,
Was in each eye, and on each breath.

But one with the royal youth
Had been from his earliest hour,
And he knew that his heart was truth,
And he knew that his hand was power;
He gave what hope his skill might give,
And bade him trust to his faith and live.

ALEXANDER took the cup,
And from beneath his head a scroll,
He drank the liquor up,
And bade PHILLIP read the roll;
And PHILLIP look'd on the page, where shame,
Treason, and poison were named with his name.

An angry flush rose on his brow,
And anger darken'd his eye,
What I have done I would do again now!
If you trust my fidelity.
The king watch'd his face, he felt he might dare
Trust the faith that was written there.

Next day the conqueror rose
From a greater conqueror free;

And again he stood amid those
Who had died his death to see:
He stood there proud of the lesson he gave
That faith and trust were made for the brave.

THE RECORD.

He sleeps, his head upon his sword,
His soldier's cloak a shroud;
His church-yard is the open field,—
Three times it has been plough'd:

The first time that the wheat sprung up
'Twas black as if with blood,
The meanest beggar turn'd away
From the unholy food.

The third year, and the grain grew fair,
As it was wont to wave;
None would have thought that golden corn
Was growing on the grave.

His lot was but a peasant's lot,
His name a peasant's name,
Not his the place of death that turns
Into a place of fame.

He fell as other thousands do,
Trampled down where they fall,
While on a single name is heap'd
The glory gain'd by all.

Yet even he whose common grave
  Lies in the open fields,
Died not without a thought of all
  The joy that glory yields.

That small white church in his own land,
  The lime trees almost hide,
Bears on the walls the names of those
  Who for their country died.

His name is written on those walls,
  His mother read it there,
With pride,—oh! no, there could not be
  Pride in the widow's prayer.

And many a stranger who shall mark
That peasant roll of fame,
Will think on prouder ones, yet say
This was a hero's name.

NOTES

TO

THE TROUBADOUR.

NOTES.

Page 17.

The spent stag on the grass is laid,
But over him is bent a maid,
Her arms and fair hair glistening
With the bright waters of the spring.

THE foundation of this tale was taken from the exquisite and wild legend in the Bride of Lammermuir. It is venturing on hallowed ground; but I have the common excuse for most human errors,—I was tempted by beauty.

Page 27.

Bends not the mountain cedar trees,
Folding their branches from the breeze.

Some ancient travellers assert, that in winter the cedars of Lebanon fold their branches together, and in this spiral form defy the storms which would otherwise destroy their outstretched limbs. I believe the fact is not well authenticated, but enough for the uses of poetry.

Page 81.

Elenore.

This tale is the versification of an old tradition in Russell's Tour through Germany. I have ventured on one or two alterations: the original makes Nero the father; and somewhat similar to the discovery of Bedreddin by his cream-tarts, in the Arabian Nights, the emperor recognizes his daughter by the flavour of a dish she alone knew how to prepare.

Page 104.

Is there a knight who, for love of me,
Into the court below will spring,
And bear from the lion the glove I fling.

This is an anecdote told of De Lorge, a knight of Francis the First's, in whose presence it took place.

Page 183.

And soon I deem'd the time would be,
For many a chief stood leagued with me.

I know not whether it may be necessary to remark, that the period I suppose in this poem is that of the later time of chivalry in Provence, when the spirit of religious enquiry was springing, Phœnix-like, from the ashes of the Albigenses.

Page 152.

Had been but as the lightning's shock,
Shedding rich ore upon the rock.

It is a belief among some savage nations,—the North

American Indians, I believe,—that where the lightning strikes it melts into gold.

Page 215.

This ballad is also taken, with some slight change, from a legend in Russell's Germany.

Page 221.

Thoulouse, now the bright resort
Of beauty and the minstrel court.
For this time it is hers to set
The victor's brow with violet.

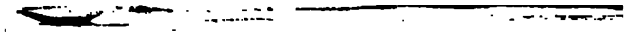
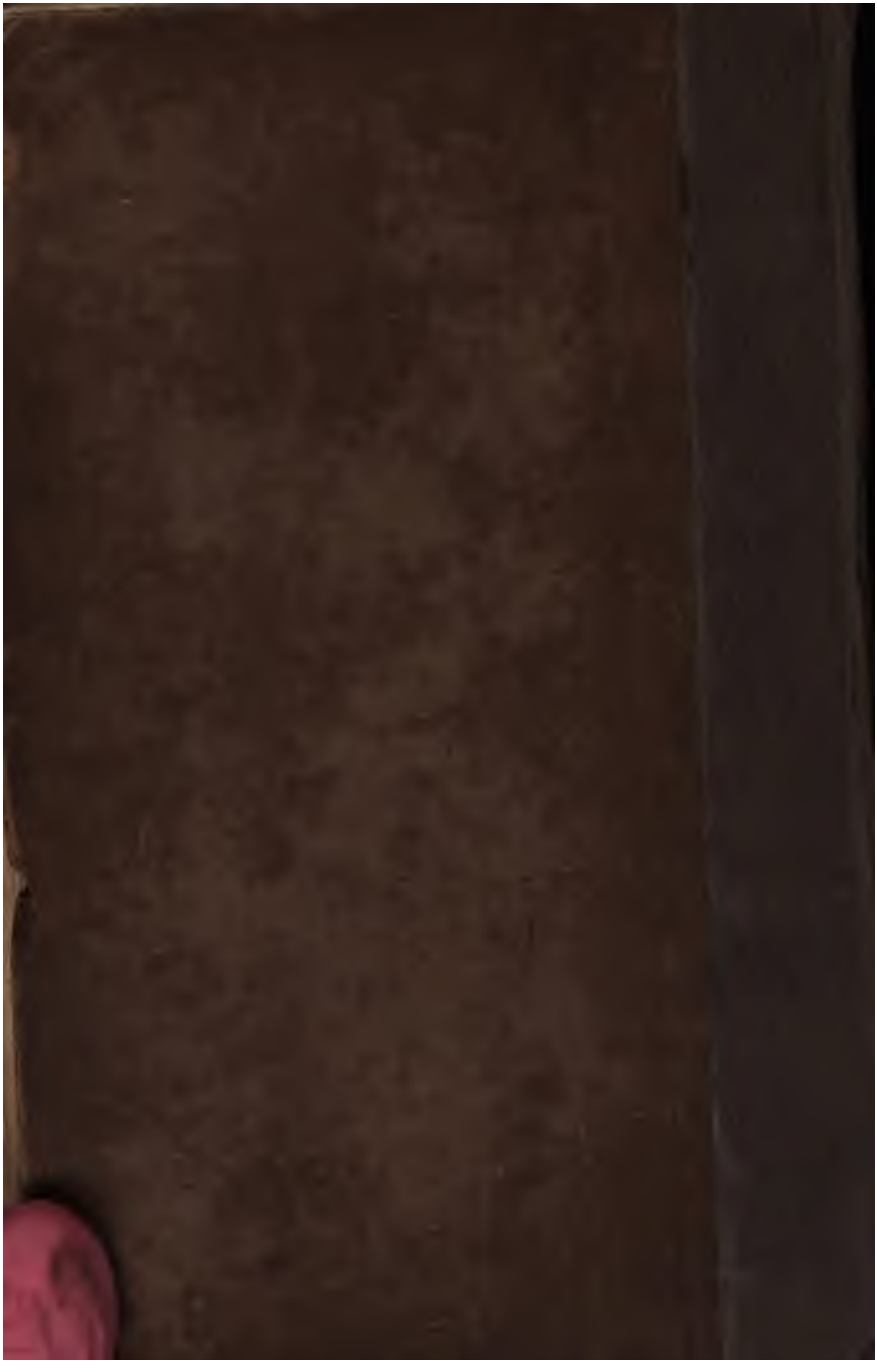
I have here given to an early age what in reality belongs to a later one; the Golden Violet was a prize given rather for the revival than the encouragement of the Troubadours. The following is Sismondi's account.

"A few versifiers of little note, had assumed, at Thoulouse, the name of Troubadours, and were accustomed to assemble together, in the gardens of the Augustine Monks, where they read their compositions to one another. In 1323, these persons resolved to form themselves into a species of academy *del Gai Sabir*, and they gave it the title of *La Sobrigaza Companhia dels septs Trobudors de Tolosa*. This "most gay society" was eagerly joined by the Capitouls, or venerable magistrates of Thoulouse, who wished, by some public festival, to reanimate the spirit of poetry. A circular letter was addressed to all the cities of Languedoc, to give notice that, on the first of May, 1324, a Golden Violet would

be decreed, as a prize, to the author of the best poem in the Provençal language."—*Sismondi on the Literature of the Troubadours.*

But there is a more romantic though less true account of the origin of the Golden Violet; the foundress of this picturesque ceremony was said to have been Clemence Isaure; but Sismondi seems to doubt even her existence.

"If the celebrated Clemence Isaure, whose eulogy was pronounced every year in the assembly of the Floral Games, and whose statue, crowned with flowers, ornamented their festivals, be not merely an imaginary being, she appears to have been the soul of these little meetings before either the magistrates had noticed them, or the public were invited to attend them. But neither the circulars of the *Sobrigaza Companhia*, nor the registers of the magistrates, make any mention of her; and notwithstanding all the zeal with which, at a subsequent period, the glory of founding the Floral Games has been attributed to her, her existence is still problematical."—*Sismondi.*

THE END.

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